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THE PIERRE TRAIL.

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS.

By Dr. Albert Carr.



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HILL CITY S. D.

1911

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

HAM MORDEN. A squaw-man living on the Cheyenne river.

MAJOR DAN CORBIN. A young trader keeping store at the Pierre crossing on the Cheyenne river. Commissioned by the governor to command cowboy and settler against the Sioux,

MARK NEWELL. An early emigrant to the Black Hills. A seeker of gold.

JIM OKOBOJI. A half-breed educated by the government. Horse thief and all around bad man,

HANS FLEDERMAUS, A German in search of a homestead,

"SMUDGE." A white boy brought up by Jim Okoboji's mother.

MAHZAHSKAH. A Sioux Indian. The white man's friend;

RED DOG. Shunksha, a Sioux chief,

ROSE. A white girl claimed by Ham Morden as his daughter. She is engaged to Maj. Corbin.

WIX, Morden's squaw. Sister of Red Dog.

KATREENA. Wife of Hans.

SYNOPSIS: ACT I. Ham Morden's crime. ACT II. To be shot at midnight. ACT III. Not guilty. ACT IV. Death of the squaw. ACT V. Christmas eve.

THE PIERRE TRAIL.

ACT I.

SCENE. *Home of Ham Morden on the border of the Sioux reservation. Long, low, log-house R. Buffalo skull over door. Cheyenne river winding, rear. Clayey walls of the Bad-lands in distance. Rough bench near house. Paddle on bench. Rude, rustic, chair with wolf skin robe, back under low cottonwood in R.*

Enter Wix from house.

Wix. Wanneechee! Lahkohtah wash-tay.

[Exit, L.]

Enter Ham Morden from house.

Ham. Last night, I could not sleep. The moaning wind and coyote's whine stretched out the lonesome hours. At last, my mind broke from me like a frightened horse. T'was then—Oh, horror!—I saw it all again. The flickering fire—the ghostly canvas of the

wagon—her outstretched arms—the child—[*Crazed, points wildly.*] There—there she is now!

Enter Wix, L. with a bundle of faggots.

Wix. What matter, Ham?

Ham. Nothing—only one of my spells.

Wix. No like um spell. Me kill somebody, no have spell all time.

Ham. You hag of darkness!

[*Picks up paddle.*

Wix. Me Wix, Ham's squaw

Ham. Begone, hellion!

[*Threatens her with paddle. She hurries to house.*

Wix. (*Aside.*) Hum crazy. Get too crazy, kill um. (*To Ham.*) Where go?

Ham. Up the river.

Wix. Better stay eat.

Ham. No. (*Aside.*) I must keep her, or kill her. She knows more than—Well, I can't kill anymore. (*Starting, points.*) Ha, see there!

Wix. (*Jumping.*) No, see nottin.

Ham. (*Recovering.*) Where's Rose?

Wix. (*Sulkily.*) Went way early. Take gun. Want to hunt jack-rabbit—maybe wolf.

Ham. Dear Rose!

Wix. (*Aside.*) Me kill her bym-by.

[*Ham goes up stage—turns.*

Ham. (*Aside, raising hand to heaven.*) Oh, God! if I am good and kind to Rose, will you forgive me the crime against the mother? [*Starts, and points.*] Ha, there!

Wix. Got um spell 'gain, huh?

Ham. (*Fiercely.*) Devill!

Wix. (*Yowling.*) Wan't to say, goo-by.

Ham. Well, good-by.

Wix. (*With smile—very soft.*) Goo-by!
[*Ham goes down to river, springs into boat and paddles up stream. Wix calls to him.*] Goo-by! [*Ham paddles off, R.*]
Dear Rose! No say, dear Wix; say, d—m
Wix. Me love Ham. Hate Rose. Kill her bym-by. Jim Okoboji shoot her father by wagon. Mother kill, too. Ham see her all time. Say, hah!
[*Jumps and points in imitation of Ham.*] Hah! [*Jumps and points.*] Hah!
[*Jumps and points.*] Ugh, Ham big, big fool! Heap big fool! [*Several shots off, L.*] Plenty shoot! [*Looks off, L.*]
Jim Okoboji—white man—white man shoot—Jim whip horse—ride fast—
[*Shots off, L.*] Ugh, plenty shot!

*Jim Okoboji, rifle in hands,
backs on, L.*

Jim. Curse those Vigilantes! [*Looks off, L.*] There comes Smudge over the divide with the horses. Now they see him. [*Shot off, L.*] Sechedo, they've hit him! No—he straightens up in the saddle, and down over the bluff he goes with the Vigilantes after him. Good boy! Good boy! [*Taps rifle.*] Come, Coyote, let me hear you whine. We'll scare the white dogs back to the settlement. [*Fires off, L.*] There goes one of them out of the saddle. They turn—they've got enough—away they go back to the settlement. [*Gives wild whoop.*] I'll teach them to let Jim Okoboji alone when he picks up a stray horse or two.

Wix. [*Advancing to Jim.*] Hah, Lakotah!

Jim. Why, bello, Wix.

Wix. Hal-lo Jim! What matter?

Jim. Vigilantes.

Wix. Get more hoss?

Jim. Yes, three more. Last night. Vigilantes chase me all morning.

Wix. Kill some?

Jim. Yes, one.

Wix. Ugh, washtay!

Jim. Body up on bluff.

[*Points up to, L.*]

Wix. White man no stop pick up man shot?

Jim. No.

Wix. Where dead man's horse?

Jim. Vigilante caught bridle, when white man fall off.

Wix. Sechedo?

Jim. Where's Ham Morden?

Wix. Gone up river.

Jim. Good! When go?

Wix. Him go; you come.

Jim. When come back?

Wix. Maybe sundown.

Jim. Ugh, heap good!

Wix. Where got horses?

Jim. Smudge run them down on the Cheyenne. Look, see—[*Points to L.R.E.*] over there on river bottom.

Wix. Washtay! White man dead, think sure?

Jim. I saw him fall out of the saddle. They didn't stop to pick him up. I guess he's dead.

Wix. Me go take um scalp.

[*Draws long knife from folds of dress. Exit, L.*]

Jim. Ham Morden drove me away from here four years ago. No, he didn't drive me,—he wouldn't dare do that—but he made it unpleasant for me.

Unpleasant, just because I made love to Rose. I ought to have taken her in the begining instead of the kid, Smudge. Well, I've got the boy, and I'll have the girl, too, in spite of Ham Morden. I'll make her my wife, as sure as I am a scholar.

Enter Smudge, L. crying.

Jim. What you sniveling about, Smudge?

Smudge. I'm shot.

Jim. They hit you, did they?

Smudge. Yes—

Jim. Where?

Smudge. In the arm.

{Shows left arm.

Jim. (*Examining wound.*) That's nothing!

Smudge. It makes me sick.

Enter Rose R.R.E. Has rifle in one hand, jackrabbit in other. Jim has back to her.

Jim. It makes you sick, hey! Well, I'll make you sick, you papoose. (*Raises hand to strike Smudge.*) Stop your yowling!

Smudge. (*Raising arm.*) Don't hit me, Jim. I saved the horses. (*Pointing*

to L.R.) They are all there. Ohh! I am so weak!

[*Rose drops jackrabbit.*]

Jim. Weak! I'll kick the weakness out of you—

Rose. (*Leveling rifle at Jim.*) It will be your last kick, Jim Okoboji.

[*Smudge runs to Rose, drops on knees, and clings to her skirts.*]

Smudge. Oh, Rose!

Jim. You, here!

Rose. Yes, Jim Okoboji, I am here—here to rescue this poor boy from your savage brutality.

Jim. (*Aside.*) I'll throw her off her guard. [*To Rose.*] Rose, you know how I love you.

Rose. And you know, how I despise both you and your love.

Jim. I am a scholar.

Rose. The education the white man gave you has only increased your capacity to do evil.

Jim. To convince you that my love is sincere, I will warn you of a great danger, a danger that even now threatens your life as you do mine. (*Suddenly.*) Look, Wix is behind you. She is going to stab you.

[*Rose screams and turns. Jim*

seizes her. They struggle.

Rose. Liar! False-hearted villain!

Jim. I got you, now.

Rose. Dog of a half-breed!

[Jim wrenches rifle from her still holding her.]

Smudge. *(Staggering towards R.)*
Don't kill her, Jim!

[Falls and faints.]

Rose. Vile wretch release me!

Enter Hans Fledemaus with carpet-bag, L.

Jim. No use, Rose. I've got you now, and I'm going to keep you in spite of Ham Morden.

[Rose and Jim struggle. Hans drops carpet-bag and takes out of it two large pistols.]

Rose. Help! Help!

Jim. I tell you, you are mine.

Hans. *(Pointing pistols at Jim.)* How you know dot?

[Jim turns, sees Hans.]

Jim. Curse the luck, beat again!

Hans. Put her down or I plo you oop.

[Jim releases Rose. She crosses to Smudge.]

Jim. *(To Hans.)* Who the devil are you?

Hans. Hans Fledermaus. I come von der fort down. Lay dose rifles by der grount down. [*Jim lays rifles down.*] Now hit der trail for Dogtown.

Jim. (*Backing towards, L.R. Hans with pistols pointed at him.*) Rose Morden, you have escaped me this time, but I'll have you yet, in spite of Ham Morden, in spite of yourself. I go now, but I'll return. And, when I do, I'll not come alone, but with the whole Sioux nation behind me.

Rose. Let me tell you, Jim Okoboji,—and if you love yourself as cowards always do, you'll heed my warning;—cross not my path again, nor claim this boy, or my rifle will do, what it might have done a moment ago. Now leave this place and take those stolen horses with you. This is no rendezvous for thieves and cut-throats. Begone!

Hans. Don't you hear vot der girl tolt you? Git, or I plo your het off, of you vas olt Zitting Bulls himself.

Jim. (*Going.*) I'll return, when I'm not expected.

Hans. Of you do, dere vill be a goot Injin. Sky-doo!

[*Hans fires pistols, Jim ducks, and dodges off L.R.E.*]

Rose. (*Kneeling, raises Smudge's head in her arms.*) Speak to me, Smudge! Speak, dear! He has fainted.

[*She rubs his face.*

Hans. Mein Gott, vot a blaces! [*To Rose.*] Iss der liddle poy deat?

Rose. No, he has fainted. If we had something to revive him—some brandy or whisky.

Hans. Visky! Dot's schnaps. Yah, I got him in mine garpet-bag. [*Puts pistols in carpet bag, and takes out bottle of liquor.*] Here it is. [*Hands bottle to Rose.*] Don't make him drunk. He's too young to stant it.

[*Rose moistens Smudge's lips with the liquor.*

Rose. To think they would shoot a boy! I must get Smudge back to the Agency, or he is ruined. [*Puts bottle to Smudge's lips.*] Drink, dear.

Hans. Der poor liddle poy!

Rose. His lips move—

Hans. Der schuaps iss goot. Dey vake him oop.

Rose. (*Giving Smudge liquor*) The color is coming back to his cheeks—

Hans. Yah! Yah!

Rose. He moves—

Hans. (*Stooping over Smudge.*) Yah,

I see his eye vink.

Smudge. [*Coming to.*] Don't hit me, Jim!

Rose. He speaks.

Hans. Vot is it?

Smudge. Don't kill me, Jim.

Hans. Vot Shim is it?

Rose. Jim Okoboji, that villainous half-breed from whom you rescued me.

Hans. Oh, dot feller!

Rose. Smudge, dear—

Smudge. Oh, don't!

Rose. It is Rose, Smudge.

Smudge. Rose! [*Opens eyes.*] Now I can die.

Hans. Don't do it, dot's a goot liddle poy.

Smudge. (*Staring at Hans.*) Who is that? Is it, Jim?

Hans. No, it's me, Hans Fledermaus.

Smudge. I don't know you.

Hans. Neffer mint, mein poy, I be a fater to you of you don't got vone.

Rose. Whoever he is, Smudge, he is a good, kind man, and a friend to the helpless in distress.

Hans. You can take your oat on dot. When I get me dot heimstet, dot varm, picked oud, und mein frau, Katreena, comes down von der fort, I take you to

mein house, und make you mein own liddle poy. How you like dot?

Smudge. You are a good man, but you talk so funny.

Hans. I bin a Dutehman, und mein frau, Katreena, she's a Dutchman too, aber she don't vas so funny as I bin.

Smudge. Rose, have you seen my dog, Bow-wow?

Rose. No, Smudge. Have you a dog?

Smudge. Yes, Bow-wow. Shunka washtay wan! He was with me on the bluff, when they shot me. [*Whistles.*] Maybe they shot him, and Bow-wow is dead. [*Whistles.*] He don't come.

Rose. He may have gone with Jim Okoboji.

Smudge. That's so.

Rose. Can you stand up, Smudge?

Smudge. I'll try. [*After an effort he stands up.*] I don't think I'd 'a' caved, Rose, if Jim hadn't 'a' grabbed you.

Hans. I'll fix dot Shim, of he tries some more foolin around here.

Rose. Hans, I like you. Give me your hand.

Hans. (*Shaking her hand.*) Yah, ve be frients.

Smudge. (*Extending hand.*) If Rose

is your friend, Hans, I am your friend.

Hans. (*Shaking Smudge's hand.*) I'll be your fater.

Smudge. I wish Rose was my sister. Then I'd have some one to own me. Jim says, I have no father, and I know old mammy Okoboji isn't my mother.

Rose. I'll be a sister to you, Smudge, for I love you as a brother.

Hans. Dot's right. She can be your sister, I'll be your mutter, und Katreena your fater. No, dot's not it! I'll be your sister, Katreena your fater—Ach, I bin mixed oop in der bet!

Rose. Here is your liquor, Hans.

[*Gives Hans bottle.*]

Hans. Oxcuse me, Miss. [*Takes a drink.*] Dot settles mein bet. [*Puts bottle in carpet-bag.*] Veli, Miss—

Rose. My name is Rose—Rose Mor-den.

Hans. I call you, Rosy. [*Looks off L.*] You denk dot feller gomes back?

Rose. The most I fear, Hans, is he will not leave, but lurk around here in hope to accomplish his evil designs against this boy and me.

Hans. Let him try dot! Of he do, Mr. Smart-injin vill go oud by der long drail.

Rose. I must go in the house, and get some bandage for Smudge's arm.

[*Exit into house. Smudge sits down on bench, R.*]

Hans. I might as vell take it easy too. [*Takes goose-neck pipe and wooden stool out of carpet-bag. Sits down on stool, fills pipe, lights it, and smokes. Smudge watches him with amused interest.*] How you feels by dis time, Smooch?

Smudge. Better.

Hans. [*Smokes, then—*] Of you don't mordify, you be all right.

Smudge. Oh, I'll be all right.

Hans. [*Smokes, then—*] Dit dot feller shoot you.

Smudge. What feller, Hans?

Hans. Shim Chokeababy.

Smudge. No. [*Laughs.*] You talk awful queer.

Hans. (*Suddenly.*) Dit you gomit zuzenzide?

Smudge. What's that?

Hans. Try to kill yourzelf.

Smudge. No—no.

Hans. Vell, who dit shoot you?

Smudge. I don't know.

Hans. Dot's funny! [*Smokes, then—*] How,olt vas you?

Smudge. I don't know.

Hans. Dot's funny! [*Smokes, then—*]
You know where you vas porn?

Smudge. No.

Hans. Dot's funny! [*Smokes, then—*]
You live mit Shim?

Smudge. When I am not at the
Agency at the Mission school.

Hans. You know dot, anyway. You
vas a smart poy.

*Enter Rose from house with
water and bandage.*

Rose. Now Smudge, I'll fix your arm.

[*Fixes Smudge's arm.*]

Hans. (*Smoking and muttering to
himself.*) I don't got somedings to eat
since morning. I eat everydings oop
vot I hat all day yesterday. A Dutch-
man can't live midout eating.

Rose. Are you hungry, Hans?

Hans. (*Lifting up carpet-bag.*)
Shoost so empty as dot garpet-bag.

[*Drops carpet-bag. It flops to-
gether.*]

Rose. Go into the house and help
yourself to whatever you find.

Hans. (*Rising.*) I'll do dot, und der
feller vot gomes next, gets nix. [*Puts*

stool and pipe into carpet-bag. Takes up carpet-bag and starts for house,—turns.] You sait votever I fint.

Rose. Everything, Hans.

Hans. Efferydings! Dot's petter yet.

[Exit into house.]

Rose. *(To Smudge.)* Yes, I saw it all.

Smudge. I didn't see you.

Rose. No; I was in the plum thicket on the other side of the bluff. You are a brave fellow, Smudge. But to think, you'd steal horses!

Smudge. I couldn't help it, Rose. I had to do what Jim told me. He'd kill me, if I didn't. *[Sniveling, wipes nose on coat-sleeve.]* I don't want to go horse stealing.

Rose. Do you know what the Vigilantes would have done with you, if they had caught you?

Smudge. *(With hesitancy.)* Yes.

Rose. Hung you.

Smudge. *(Falling on his knees.)* Rose, dear Rose, I promise you on my knees, and God hears me, I'll never do anything wrong again. *(Rising to feet.)* No, not if I die for it; not if Jim kills me.

Rose. *(Embracing him.)* My own boy!

Smudge. Jim stole me away from the agency this time. You wont let him

steal me again?

Rose. No, no! You were brought to the Agency through my efforts. I told the agent and the good lady of the Mission about you. With her help, I persuaded the agent to send after you, and bring you in. You were a perfect little savage then, and would dance and whoop, and talk Sioux and broken English all in one breath. But you took kindly to what was taught you, and your schooling at the agency changed you in a few years, yes, more than my schooling did me in the same time. My father retained the manners of civilization, and had taught me much before I went to the Mission.

Smudge. Do you believe Ham Morden is your real father?

Rose. Of course, I do.

Smudge. Wix isn't your mother. You're no Indian—no half-breed.

-Rose. My father brought me with him when he came here.

Smudge. Where is your mother?

Rose. Father said she died back in the states.

Smudge. Jim Okoboji says, Ham Morden used to get drunk, and do deviltry just like the Indians.

Rose. That is a half-breed lie.

Smudge. I'm no Indien. I'd like to know where I came from. I couldn't have just come up out of the ground like one of mammy Okoboji's turnips.

Rose. There is a great mystery about your origen. Some day we'll solve it, and find out who you are.

Smudge. Jim must know, for he's a scholar.

Rose. Yes, Jim's a scholar. The kind the goverment makes over at the Indian schools in the states, and calls civilized. Yes, Jim may know all about you, but will Jim tell?

Smudge. Jim is a bad man. If he heard me say that, he'd kill me, but I'll tell the truth if I die for it.

[*Rose takes gold cross off of neck.*]

Rose. Here is a golden cross, the good bishop gave me when he visited the Agency. Wear this, [*Puts cross on Smudges neck.*] and whenever you are tempted to do wrong. look at it and think of poor Rose, and do right.

Smudge. [*Grasping her hand.*] Yes, yes, if I'm killed for it.

Enter Hans from house with carpet-bag.

Hans. (*Aside.*) I ate me a whole shackrabbit.

Rose. Did you find enough to eat.
Hans?

Hans. Yah, blenty; blenty. Dere is some left—(*Aside.*) for kitty.

Enter Wix, L. dragging dead dog by hind legs. It is a small black and white shepherd. She does not immediately see Hans, Rose and Smudge. They are, R.

Wix. No find white man. Get doggy. Make nice stew.

Hans. (*Sees Wix—snatches pistols from carpet-bag.*) Indians! Indians!
[*Aims pistols at Wix.*

Wix. (*Dodging.*) No shoote, no shoote! Me Lahkotah—white man squaw. Rosy, Rosy, no let um shoote.

Rose. Don't shoot, Hans. That is my father's squaw.

Hans. Is dot so! (*Lowering pistols.*) Den I wait 'dil your fater comes, und shoot him.

Smudge. That's my dog, Bowwow. And he's dead!

Wix. Nice doggy. Cook um. Make good stew.

Smudge. Don't let her cook Bowwow.

Hans. (*To Wix, pointing pistols at her.*) Drop dot dog, or I drop you.

Wix. Ugh! Ugh!

[*Drops dog, and sidles across stage to house.*]

Rose. (*To Wix.*) Father forbid any of your savage cookery in the house. If he hears of this, he will drive you back to your tribe.

Wix. Secheedo!

[*Exit into house.*]

Smudge. (*Crossing to dog.*) Poor Bowwow!

[*Takes dog up in arms, and exits, R. with him. Blubbers.*]

Hans. (*Aside.*) Dot squaw vas going to cook Bowwow. [*Makes a sick face.*] Maype dot don't vas a shack-rabbit vot I ate me so quick down.

[*Gags, with gulping sound, several times. Rose picks up rifles.*]

Rose. Poor Smudge—his heart is broken.

[*Sets rifles against house.*]

Hans. Dit dot Indianer voman kill dot dog?

Rose. No, I think the Vigilantes shot him. Didn't you see them?

Hans. I saw noddings vot shot dot dog.

Enter Smudge, R. Throws himself down on bench. Buries head in arms.

Rose. You came down the trail, didn't you?

Hans. Yah, by der bluff.

Rose. Did you see some men on horseback, up on the bluff, riding away?

Hans. I saw somedings moving. I dought it might be Indians.

Enter Mahzahskah on horseback, L.R.E. Dashes across rear of stage and off R.R.E.

Rose. (Turns—sees Mahzahskah.) Mahzahskah!

Hans. (Turning, with a jump.) Vot's dot!

Enter Mahzahskah on foot, R. R.E. Comes down center of stage.

Rose. It is Mahzahskah.

Hans. Indians! Indians!

Mahzahskah. (Advancing towards Rose.) Wabzhinzinkah!

Hans. (Pointing pistols at Mahzahskah.) Stant, or I shoot you det in vone second.

[*Rose rushes to Mahzahskah.*

Rose. (*Grasping his hand.*) Mahzahskah, Mahzahskah, I am so glad you have come!

Hans. (*Lowering pistols, aside.*) An-nodder vone of der family.

[*Smudge advances to Rose and Mahzahskah.*

Mahzahskah. (*To Rose.*) Zitkahdan skah washtay, how! (*Shaking her hand.*) How! How!

Smudge. (*Extending hand to Mahzahskah.*) How, Mahzahskah, Lahkotah washtay!

Mahzahskah. (*Shaking Smudge's hand.*) How, hokshinnah cistinnah! How! How! (*To Rose, pointing to Hans.*) De taku hay?

Rose. Wiheashtah washtay.

Mahzahskah. Hah.

Hans. (*To Mahzahskah.*) Koennen sie Deutsch sprechen? [*Mahzahskah looks at Rose, then shakes head negatively.*] Nein?

Rose. This is Mahzahskah, Hans, a friendly Indian.

Hans. Is dot so! Vell, I go in und see vot your mutter is cooking.

Rose. That squaw is not my mother.

Hans. Den vhere iss your mutter?

Rose. My mother is dead.

Hans. Dot's too bad. Vell, I see anyway, vot dot squaw is cooking. [*Goes towards house. Aside, making a sick face.*] She vas going to cook Bowwow. Goo—oo!

[*Exit into house.*]

Mahzahskah. When come back from Agency?

Rose. A week ago.

[*Smudge retires to bench and lies down on it.*]

Mahzahskah. Major Dan hear um, no blieve um. Sen me to see.

Rose. Well, you see I am here, whether Mr. Dan Corbin believes it or not. I am glad to see you, Maz, but I think Dan might have come himself.

Mahzahskah. No can come right away. Sioux heart bad. Want to flight. Gov' nor sen Major Dan paper, say: Watch Indian. All cowboy come down to Major Dan. Plenty gun, plenty powder.

Rose. Jim Okoboji was here.

Mahzahskah. Jim Okoboji! Ugh, bad man! Secheedo!

Rose. He has been stealing horses.

Mahzahskah. Steal horse all time.

Rose. I fear he is lurking around here now. (*Suddenly grasps Mahzah-*

skah's arm, and speaks vehemently.)
Mahzahskah, this place is full of mystery, and perhaps murder—but my father is good.

Mahzahskah. Him squaw-man.

Rose. Those words burn, Mahzahskah. My mind is made up. I shall leave this place forever. (*Takes ring from finger.*) Here, take this ring, and give it to Dan. (*Gives Mahzahskah ring.*) He gave it to me the last time he was at the Agency. Tell him to come to me at once, or keep the ring until he finds another to wear it.

Mahzahskah. Major Dan love Rose.

Rose. Tell him the half-breed is here.

Mahzahskah. Rose 'fraid, me stay.

Rose. No, Mahzahskah, but do as I bid you. If you ride at your best speed, you will reach the trading post and return with Dan before sunrise. Go, friend of the white man, my life and happiness may depend upon your haste.

Mahzahskah. No stop. Go fast. No see tree. Goo-by!

Rose. Good-by, Mahzahskah, and may the spirit of the great Wahkan go with you.

Mahzahskah. Ugh, got good horse. Shunkahkah washtay.

[Runs to R.R.E. and exits. Immediately reenters on horseback, dashes across rear stage, and waves hand to Rose. She waves hand to him. He exits L.R.E.]

Enter Hans from house followed by Wix. Hans has pistols, one in each trouser's pocket, handle sticking out. Has frying pan in hand. In it are several half-cooked pieces of jack-rabbit.

Wix. (Grabbing at frying pan.) Eat all up! Wanneechee! Wanneechee!

Hans. Vell, of you got der itchee, scratchee, scratchee.

[Wix snatches frying pan from Hans.]

Wix. Ugh, secheedo!

[Dodges into house.]

Rose. (Advancing to Hans.) Hist! Hans, there is a dead white man up on that bluff.

[Points up and to L.]

Hans. Is dot so!

Rose. The man was shot by Jim Okoboji. I want to get the body away from the wolves to-night. I wish you would go up and bury him.

Hans. I do dot, Rosy—you bet I do dot.

Rose. I'll get you the pick and spade.

[*Goes to rear of house and gets pick and spade.*]

Hans. I take mein pipe mit me.

[*Takes pipe out of carpet-bag.*]

Rose. Here they are, Hans.

Hans. Yi-yah! [*Puts pipe in coat pocket, takes pick and spade from Rose, and picks up carpet-bag.*] Aber here—here is mein garpet-bag. Take it, und don't lose it undil I gome back.

Rose. (*Taking carpet-bag.*) I'll keep it safe.

Hans. Dank you, Rosy, dank you. [*Takes out pipe and lights it. Puts pick and spade on shoulder. Smokes—going.*] Now, I bin a funeral.

[*Exit, L.*]

Rose. Hans is a good man. I must get Smudge away from here,—out of the power of that half-breed. If Hans will take nim, he will be safe. Hans will care for him, and protect him. (*Puts carpet-bag down, R.*) I have determined to leave this place. But why should I! My father loves me, is kind to me, and will protect me. I should have remained at the Agency but for Jim Okoboji. He

insulted me, at every turn, with his attentions. In vain, I besought the agent to relieve me of this persecution. He seemed entirely under the influence of the half-breed. I left the Agency in despair, and returned to my father. But even here he dares to obtrude his hateful presence. My rifle shall befriend me. Oh, Dan have you forgotten me!

Enter Hans, L. with pick and spade.

Hans. He don't vas dere.

Rose. Not there!

Hans. No, not even der place vhere he lait.

Rose. More mystery.

[Takes pick and spade and places them rear of house.]

Hans. Vell, Miss Rosy, of you excuse me, I go und look me some farms oud.

Rose. You better not go, Hans. I fear for your safety. I am filled with a sense of mistrust. You better stay.

Hans. Do you denk I'm afraid, vhen I got dese can-nones?

[Draws pistols from pockets.]

Rose. *(Weirdly, clutching his arm.)*
Man, I tell you there is danger—danger which like the wolf is slowly creeping from its lair.

Hans. You scare me to det!

Rose. (*Pleadingly.*) Don't go, Hans.

Hans. Rosy, you don't know me. I looks me like a fool outside, but inside, I bin shoost so cunning as der fox, und shoost so pizen as der raddlesnake.

Rose. I believe you are a brave shrewd man, but I—

Hans. I vas in der Cherman army for seven years. Und I vights like der tevil.

[*Flourishes pistols.*]

Rose. Yes, Hans—but don't go. Some lurking foe might shoot you.

Hans. Den I shoot too.

Rose. I fear the Sioux are stirring. And we need you—yes, need you.

Hans. Vell, vell, Rosy, you vas a goot girl. Und kint, shoost like mein Katreena. Don't make yourzelf any vorry. I be back before die sun falls down, goot und hoongry, und all retty for annoder shack-rabbit. (*Aside.*) Maybe dot don't vas a shack-rabbit vot I— (*Gags.*) Goo-ooo! (*To Rose.*) I dells you vone dings, Miss Rosy, of dot Shim Chokeababy—

Rose. Okoboji, Hans.

Hans. Yah! Yah! Pokochoby! Of he comes 'rout here, while I am gone,

I giff him der grant rahzoo by der boneyard oud, so soon as I come pack.

[*Exit, R.R.E. Smudge is asleep on bench, R. Rose crosses to bench.*]

ROSE. Poor tired boy. sleep on. Fatherless, motherless, beaten, misguided, and wounded, but not forsaken. [*Turns and gazes towards river.*] The day closes, and the Cheyenne flows placidly on with the passing hours. [*Sunset glow.*] Oh, river, I would you could speak, and tell me the wild stories of the past—the savage wars, the deeds of tomahawk and knife, the midnight surprise, the torture and the dance, and all the joys and sorrows of the simple people, who for ages have dwelt along thy shores. [*Drops down into rustic chair.*] I have a strange forboding of evil to-day. Can it be, my father is in league with horse thieves! His gloomy mutterings, his starts and fits of frenzy, and the weird hag with whom he companions, all awake in me a dreadful suspicion, I strive in vain to drive away. And when I ask him of my mother, he starts as thought a serpent stung him. Can she have wronged him! No, no, for she would love as I would love, with all her heart, all her soul. (*Clasping her*

hands.) Mother! Mother! Oh, when I speak that word, dim memories creep upon me which I cannot connect--other faces which I seem to know, and yet know not. I may have dreamt these things, but it is strange, very strange, a dream should so impress me. (*Grows drowsy.*) Mother--dear mother. (*Sinks back in chair.*) Mother--mother--

[*Sleeps.*

Enter Wix from house, stealthily.

Wix. Rosy sleep. Ham gone. Good time kill her. [*Draws knife*] Tell Ham, Jim kill her. Ham love Wix more, no got datter. Rosy no Ham's datter, anyway. Kill her this time sure. Knife sharp--[*Steals slowly up to Rose. Just as she is about to stab her, shot off L,R. Rose springs to feet. Smudge sits up on bench. Wix steps back, dropping hand with knife behind her concealing knife. Smiles blandly.*] Rosy sleep, hear shot, wake up.

Rose. (*Commandingly, and pointing to house.*) Go into the house.

Wix. (*Cringing, picks up jack-rabbit dropped by Rose. Still holds knife behind her.*) Nice rabbit. Make supper, tend house--tepee washtay.

[*Backs into house.*]

Smudge. (*Rubbing eyes.*) Rose, I heard a shot.

Rose. Yes, off there.

[*Points to L.*]

Smudge. (*Springing to feet.*) Are you hurt?

Rose. No.

[*Shot off L.*]

Smudge. Another shot.

Rose. More murder! (*Looks off L.*) See, a man rides madly down the bluff—now he turns in the saddle—[*Shot off L.*] he fires back as though pursued. He approaches—he is here.

*Mark Newell backs on L.
rifle in hands.*

Mark. (*Turning.*) Thank God, a house at last!

Rose. Who are you?

Mark. Mark Newell.

Rose. Are you hurt, sir?

Mark. No, but by the number o shots fired at me by some concealed foe—(*Notices Rose's face.*) My God, that face! Girl, who are you?

Rose. Rose Morden.

Mark. And this place?

Mark. Ham Morden's ranch.

Mark. At last, at last!

Rose. I pray you leave this place, before further harm befall you. Ride to the north west, and tarry not until you reach the fort.

Mark. Girl, danger and I are too well acquainted for me to act the coward now. I am in search of my children. I lost them fourteen years ago. I was coming to those hills whose dark peaks, you may see rising to the heavens, from yonder bluff.

[*Points to L.*

Rose. The Black Hills.

Mark. Yes, the Black Hills. Excited by some rumors of their great mineral wealth, I rushed on without considering the danger—the peril of such unprotected haste.

Rose. (*Aside.*) That voice!

Mark. Three days out from fort Pierre, at midnight, I was attack by a half breed ruffian, a white man, and a squaw; my horses and cattle run off; my wife murdered, and as I then supposed, my children too. Wounded and bleeding, I crept under the wagon to die. An Indian boy passing by in the morning found me in a weak and helpless state. Moved by some good spirit, he

brought me food and water, and when I recovered so I could move, he guided and assisted me back to Pierre. God bless that Indian boy!

Rose. What became of the boy?

Mark. We parted at the fort. Before he left, I gave him twenty five dollars, all in silver quarters. With this, he was delighted. I also gave him my pocket piece. It was a brass Chinese coin with a square hole in the center.

Rose. (*Aside.*) Mahzahskah wears such a coin upon his neck.

Mark. (*Taking letter from pocket.*) Look girl, I hold in my hand a letter from one Daniel Corbin of these parts—

Rose. From Dan Corbin!

Mark. Yes,—a young man I have known from childhood. Here is the letter—read.

[*Rose takes letter.*]

Rose. Dan writes: (*Reads.*) *Informed by Mahzahskah, friendly Indian—from other Indians—other sources—traced from point to point—*

Mark. I find in that communication that which, not alone encourages me, but convinces me, my children still live. Read on.

Rose. (*Reads.*) *Certain Indian camped*

on creek below hearing shot ran up to where you were camped--saw squaw standing near fire with white baby--fire smoking--half-breed looking at fire said smudge--squaw smiled, held up baby and named it, Smudge.

[Rose stares at letter. Smudge with wonder and amazement advances towards her.

Mark. Read on, read on.

Rose. (*Reads.*) *Ham Morden, a white man; Jim Okoboji, a young half-breed, and a fierce squaw named, Wix--(To Mark.) Oh, sir! I can't read no more.*

[Extends letter to Mark.

Mark. (*Taking letter.*) I know it, girl; the truth is too apparent.

Rose. What was your daughter's name?

Mark. Rose. My wife screamed it, when the half-breed shot me down. Then I fainted from shock and loss of blood. When I came to, all was dark and still. 'Twas then I crept under the wagon to die.

Rose. Did you find any trace of your little daughter and the baby, in the morning?

Mark. No. The white man took my daughter: the squaw, my baby boy.

Rose. Did the squaw keep the baby?

Mark. No, she afterwards gave the baby to an old squaw, the mother of the half-breed.

Rose. How do you know all this?

Mark. (*Tapping letter.*) It is all in this letter, and more—much more. And girl, until someone can prove by evidence as indisputable as the water running in yonder river, that you are not my child, I'll claim you as my daughter.

Rose. Oh, sir! there is a name, and memory links it with a face—a gentle, loving face. The name is Ruth.

Mark. That was your mother's name. [*Takes picture from pocket.*] See, here is her face.

[*Rose seizes picture. Smudge comes close to her side. Both gaze intently at picture.*]

Rose. This is the face. It is—it is my mother.

Mark. (*Throwing arms about her.*) My daughter! My daughter! (*Noticing Smudge.*) What boy is that?

Rose. That is Smudge.

Mark. (*Throwing his arms about Smudge.*) My baby, Mark—my son!

Smudge. Someone owns me at last,

and Rose is my sister.

[*They sob and cry with arms about one another.*]

Ham Morden, in boat. paddles on from R. down river to rear center. Jumps out of boat and fastens it to shore. Advances with paddle in hand.

Rose. Oh! sir, if I am your daughter, who—who then is Ham Morden?

Mark. Your mother's murderer.

[*Ham drops paddle.*]

Ham. (*Looking up.*) May God have mercy upon his soul! [*Rose, Mark, and Smudge turn and stare at Ham. Then they part, giving full view of Ham, C. Rose, and Smudge to R. Mark to L.*] Why do you stare? I am Ham Morden.

Mark. And I am Mark Newell, the father of these stolen children—the husband of the woman you murdered. It was on that night—

Ham. (*Staring abstractedly into space.*) Yes—yes—it was on that night.

Mark. (*Raising rifle.*) Ham Morden, guilty, or not guilty?

Ham. (*Loudly.*) Guilty.

Mark. Then, life for life.

[*Levels rifle at Ham. Rose*

rushes between Mark and Ham.

Rose. (*Wildly.*) Oh, Ham—father, Ham, recall that awful word. It cannot, cannot be!

Ham. But it is, child, it is. (*Holds up hands.*) These hands are red with your mother's blood.

[*Rose shrinks from Ham.*

Mark. Back, daughter, back. The heartless, villainous, wretch must die.

[*Rose turns, seizes barrel of Mark's extended rifle, and presses it down.*

Rose. If Ham Morden is guilty, he must die. But not with such eager, relentless haste. He must have time to repent—time to pray.

[*Tableau.*

DROP-CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE. *Same as in act first.*
Time, evening. Large, round, yellow
harvest moon.

Discovered: Ham Morden, R.
seated on bench with legs bound
and arms tied behind him.
Mark Newell with rifle. C.
Rose, L.C.

Mark. Ham Morden, at midnight, I will execute upon you, the sentence of your crime. Your kindness to my daughter through the long years of our separation; your severe repentance; your yielding to justice and acknowledgment of guilt, together with the fatherly care so long extended to the child whose mother you murdered, [*Ham groans.*] may be of advantage to you, when you stand before the great judgment seat of Him whose law, you have violated. I leave you for the present to God and your conscience.

[*Exit into house.*]

Ham. Rose.

Rose. Sir?

Ham. Come and kneel by me here.

Rose. (*Sorrowfully.*) I want to forgive you Ham, but I can't.

Ham. (*Pitifully.*) Won't you come?

Rose. (*After a struggle.*) Well, what is it?

[*Kneels at his knees.*]

Ham. Rose, I am a man, naturally, of good impulses, but subject to spells of morbid gloom, I have at times sought relief in drink.

Rose. I pity you.

Ham. Thank you, child, I need your pity. The half breed knew my failing, and prepared me for the act. I fired in the dark, but when I saw what I had done, it sobered me with the sight.

Rose. (*Rising.*) Cruel, cruel, man!

Ham. Two words she uttered as she fell--

Rose. What were they, Ham, what were they?

Ham. My babe!

Rose. (*Sobbing.*) Poor mother!

Ham. Just as I stood, dumb and staring in the flickering light of the camp fire, Wix approached me with you in her arms. I snatched you from her,

and commanding her to bring the babe, I rushed through the darkness to my tepee. There, I cried over you the live-long night.

Rose. Did you not receive a share of the horses and cattle?

Ham. No. No. Not a hoof. The half-breed took them all, and he was welcome to them.

Rose. Ham, how came you here, and in such evil company?

Ham. My life has been a life of evil influences. Born in the South of wealthy parents; a passionate, imperious, extravagant mother, and a yielding father; pampered with every vice; I started wrong, and have been wrong ever since. But to shoot an innocent, loving woman with her babe in her arms—I—I—

[Bursts into tears. Breaks completely down.]

Rose. *(Kneeling at his knees.)* Oh, Ham, why did you do it, why did you do it!

Ham. *(Vehemently.)* Why? Because Satan only triumphs when he steals the heart that is truly good. I've fought the devil, and fought him hard, but he downed me in the end—he

downed me in the end.

Rose. Too bad, Ham, too bad!

Ham. And now, when I could do good, perhaps save you all from destruction, I must die.

Rose. Oh! Oh!

Ham. When by my intercession, I might hold back the angry Sioux from the violence he meditates against the settler; when, if free, I might this hour save your father's life, and you from the arms of that hated half-breed, I must die.

Rose. (*Springing to her feet.*) It must not be.

Ham. (*Rising to feet.*) Give me but a chance, and of your own free will—for I am your prisoner, bound or unbound—give me but a chance, I say, and I'll save three lives where I took one, and make my record square above, while with my life, I balance up below.

Rose. Is there such danger?

Ham. Why, girl, there are indians lurking in every bush, in every grove along the river.

Rose. (*Walking stage.*) What shall I do! What shall I do! Mother, mother! Oh, Ham, how could you commit such an awful crime!

[Shot off, R.R.E.]

Ham. A signal!

Rose. Father in danger—Smudge in danger—night and darkness—that evil hearted half-breed—surrounded by foes, and—Oh, if Dan would only come! Something must be done!

[Several wild yells and whoops off, R.R.E.]

Ham. The Indians are gathering for the war-dance. Come, Rose, unbind me. Why do you hesitate?

Rose. What shall I do!

[Beating of Indian drum off R.R.E.]

Ham. The Indian drum! *[Indian war chant with drum off R.R.E.]* Quick, girl, release me, or all is lost.

Rose. I trust you, Ham.

[Releases him.]

Ham. Thank God!

Rose. Now, what will you do to save us?

Ham. Go down among the Sioux.

Rose. They will kill you.

Ham. Kill me, no. I am kohlah skah wan, and when Kohlaskah speaks, the Sioux will hear his words. Give me your knife and revolver. Your father took mine.

[Rose gives him knife and revolver.]

*Long Indian whoop at distance off,
R.R.E.*

Rose. Don't go, Ham. I set you free, that you might help us here.

[Indian drum and chant off, R.R.E.]

Ham. Koblaskah will speak, and the council will hear his words.

*[Shouts at distance of "Okoboji!" off,
R.R.E.]*

Rose. Hark!

Ham, (*Flourishing knife.*) Jim Okoboji must die.

[Dashes off, R.R.E. Rose gazes after him.]

Rose. Father may chide for this. But Ham will return. And then—I shudder to think of it! Ham was my father. He loved and cared for me as the best of fathers. So tender, ever gentle, all for me. Why should my father shoot him. He is not an officer of the law. If he does as he declares he will, he will be guilty of murder, too. The law may demand of him his right for Ham's destruction. Father will answer, he killed my wife. And then, the Law cries out: The proof? His own confession. Who witnessed this confession? My children. Uncertain evidence. A child will swear to anything to save

a parents life. My father is rash—rash as in his previous act, placing my poor mother and her helpless babes, without the least precaution, in such deadly danger. And yet, if Ham is guilty, he must die. But justly, and by the law, not by my father's hand. Ham was drunk. He did not know—he may be mistaken. It is not Ham's nature to murder a helpless woman, no, not in his sober senses. [*Goes to house. Sees knife and revolver near door.*] Why, here is Ham's knife and revolver. [*Picks them up.*] Father must have laid them here, when he took them from Ham.

[*Puts them in belt.*]

Enter Mark Newell from house with rifle.

[*Rose retires to C.*]

Mark. Where is Morden?

Rose. (*Evasively.*) He is not here.

Mark. How did he release himself?

Rose. He did not release himself.

Mark. He was bound—Who set him free?

Rose. I did.

Mark. Daughter, would you assist the murderer of your mother to escape from justice?

Rose. No, not from justice, but from injustice.

Mark. What do you mean?

Rose. That you have no right to shoot Ham Morden.

Mark. No right to kill the man, who killed my wife!

Rose. You are not an officer of the law.

Mark. Girl, you trifle with me, and almost turn me 'gainst you.

Rose. Listen. You are my father, but to me a stranger. Ham was my father. This I did believe. And, as a father, from my childhood up, watched over me, protected me, and loved me with a love so tender, so self-sacrificing to my comfort and to every want of mine, that, were he guilty of a thousand crimes, he should have *justice*, if by any power or act of mine, it might be gotten for him.

Mark. (*Bitterly.*) Better, perhaps, had I left you to your fate.

Rose. Did you see Ham shoot mother?

Mark. Shoot her! He didn't shoot her. The cowardly villain stabbed her in the back.

Rose. How do know mother was stabbed, and not shot?

Mark. I examined the body.

Rose. Did you see Ham stab her?

Mark. No, I was on the other side of the wagon.

Rose. Then, how do you know *he* stabbed her?

Mark. Jim Okoboji says so.

Rose. Jim Okoboji!

Mark. Yes, it is in this letter. (*Takes letter from pocket.*) Okoboji confessed all to Corbin, but under the pledge he wouldn't use it against him with the government.

Rose. Jim Okoboji was ever a black hearted liar.

Mark. Morden has confessed.

Rose. Ham says he shot mother. He never said he stabbed her. Ham may be mistaken. Jim Okoboji may be lying. You may be in need of calmness and judgment.

Mark. (*With deep sorrow.*) Rose, near the Pierre trail, there is a grave made by me when hardly able to lift my aching head. With my knife I backed the dry earth, and with my hands I threw out the dirt. Staggering with weakness, I gathered the stones I piled upon it, the only mounument that marks that lonely spot—your mother's

grave. (*Going.*) I leave you to your thoughts. .

[Exit, with bowed head, slowly into house.]

Rose. (*Falling on her knees.*) Dear mother, if in this dark hour of trial, thou dost look down upon thy child, let thy loving spirit descend upon me, and tell me what to do. Or, if as a gentle angel thou dost wander through the silence of the night whispering good counsel to the innocent—

*Enter Jim Okoboji, R. R. E.
Steals up to Rose, and seizing
her, places hand over her
mouth.*

Jim. Silence, or I'll take your life!
[*Rose struggles.*] No, trifling, now.
[*Drags her up stage.*

*Enter two Indians, R. R. E.
They seize upon Rose, and with
Jim, drag her towards R. R. E.
Enter Smudge from house. He
sees Jim and Indians with
Rose.*

Smudge. Don't kill her, Jim!
[*Exeunt Jim and Indians with
Rose. Smudge jumps, stamps, and*

hollers.

Smudge. Father! Father!

*Enter Mark Newell hastily
from house. Has rifle.*

Mark. What's the matter, boy?

Smudge. (*Pointing to R.R.E.*) Rose!
Rose!

Mark. What of her?

Smudge. Jim and the Indians have
carried her off.

Mark. I comprehend it all. It is
that villain, Morden. The dissembler
has deceived me.—Threw me off my
guard with his false submission and
repentance, until he could steal away
my daughter. But I'll have his life,
yet.

Smudge. It wasn't Ham, father. It
was Jim and the Indians.

Mark. All the same, my boy. All
Morden's gang, and ever ready to do his
bidding. Back Mark, some one
approaches.

[*They crouch near left wing.*

*Enter Wix, R. followed by Hans
with pistols pointed at her.*

Hans. Valk oop, valk oop!

Wix. Waneechee!

Mark. (*Leveling rifle at Wix and Hans.*) Stand, or I fire!

Hans. (*Thrusting pistols over squaw's shoulders.*) Of you doo, I shoot too.

Smudge. Don't, father! It is Hans.

[*Mark lowers rifle.*]

Hans. (*To Wix.*) Now, olt laty, you go into der house, und cook me some shack-rabbit.

[*Mark crosses to Wix.*]

Wix. (*Staring at Mark.*) No ded! White man spirit. (*Gives scared whoop.*) Wahkahn!

[*Rushes into house.*]

Hans. She's dickled to denk how I'll eat her shack-rabbit.

Smudge. Hans, this is my father.

Hans. Is dot so!

Mark. We are in danger, here, sir. You will help us fight the foe?

Hans. I fights like der tevil.

Mark. Who is that squaw?

Hans. Vix.

Mark. Vix!

Smudge. Wix, father, Wix.

[*Mark rushes into house followed by Smudge.*]

Hans. (*Gazing after them.*) Dot olt feller, he vants some shack-rabbit, too. Vell, I fount me a goot farm down by

der river on, mit goot lant, dwo springs, und a voots. To-morrow I build me a dungoud, und denn I send for Katreena. Aber dere iss nopetty to send. I go meinself.

Enter Mark from house followed by Smudge.

Mark. She has escaped.

Hans, Who escaped?

Smudge. Wix.

[Hans makes a comical run for the house. Exit into house.]

Mark. We certainly searched every corner of the house.

Smudge. She may have escaped by the window.

Mark. (*Tapping rifle.*) She'll not escape this, next time. Hark! I hear footsteps. It may be another villain after you. Come.

[They cross to L. and crouch near wing.]

Enter Ham Morden, R.R.E. Advances to R. C. Appears dejected and discouraged,

Ham. If I had the girl and the boy away from here, we might fight it out, for fight they will. I have barely

escaped with my life.

Mark. (*Advancing and leveling rifle at Ham.*) False hearted and dissembling villain—

Ham. I am here.

Mark. And I am here—here, Ham Morden, to close accounts with you. Your mock repentance moved me to spare your life until midnight. But I have changed the time—changed it to *now*.

Ham. (*Taking position.*) I am ready.

Mark. I'll give you time to pray, if your brutal heart has any prayer left in it.

Ham. Mark, Mark, why are you so bitter! I have not deceived you. I have returned. I—

Mark. Pray, man, pray.

Ham. I have prayed, Newell—prayed as no mortal ever prayed..

Mark. (*Raising rifle.*) Pray, or I shoot.

Ham. Grant me one favor, Mark.

Mark. Pray--pray.

Ham. (*Dropping to knees.*) One little favor, Newell, to a man about to die.

Smudge. Oh, father! don't refuse him.

Mark. (*Lowering rifle.*) Well, what is it Ham Morden?

Ham. Call Rose.

Smudge. She's gone.

Ham. (*Springing to his feet.*) Gone! Gone where?

Mark. Hypocrite, you know too well.

Ham. I have not seen nor spoken with her since we parted.

Mark. And that was not long ago.

Ham. No, it wasn't long ago.

Mark. No, your vile work was quickly done.

Ham. I am bewildered—Smudge, where is Rose?

Smudge. Jim Okoboji and the Indians stole her away.

Ham. (*Excitedly.*) Mark, lower your rifle. I cannot die, yet.

Enter Hans from house.

Mark. Time's up.

[*Smudge covers his face with his hands.*]

Ham. No, Mark, for God sake, not yet. I must rescue Rose. Think, man, that half-breed—

Mark, Ham Morden have done with this deception. You sent that half-breed and the savages to steal my

daughter, and have come yourself to steal my boy, and, perhaps, to murder me. But I was on my guard.

Ham. Mark, we lose time.

Mark. She cut you loose,—but, poor child, you wound around her innocent heart.

Ham. If I have sought to rob you of your child, why didn't I take her when she set me loose.

Mark. Because she was armed.

Ham. Armed! Here are her knife and revolver, [*Takes them from belt. Mark threatens him with rifle. Ham returns knife and revolver to belt.*] She gave them to me when we parted.

Mark. Liar! I saw her knife and revolver in her belt after you had left.

Ham. My God! My God! My Rose!
[*Hans crosses to Mark.*]

Mark. Time's up.

Ham. No Newell—give me 'til midnight.

Mark. (*Raising rifle.*) Ready!

Ham. 'Til midnight—only 'til midnight.

Mark. •Aim!

[*Aims rifle at Ham.*]

Ham. Only 'til midnight, Mark—only 'til midnight.

Mark. Fire!

[*Hans knocks Mark's gun up just as Mark says the word "fire" and Mark shoots into the air.*]

Ham. At midnight, Mark.

[*Dashes off R. R. E. Mark drops rifle, and seizes Hans by throat with both hands*]

Mark. Meddler!

Hans, (*Pointing pistols over Mark's arms.*) Look here, olt man, don't you mongy mit me, or I plo der whole top of your het off.

[*Mark releases Hans.*]

Mark. Sir, that man murdered my wife fourteen years ago. By your meddlesome inteference, you have robbed me of a righteous vengeance. (*To Smudge.*) Come, Mark, we will go into the house; make the windows secure; bolt and bar the doors, and, let come what will, make good our defence until morning.

Smudge. What will Hans do?

Mark. Let the Dutch fool shift for himself.

[*Takes Smudge by the arm and leads him into house. Closes door behind him with a slam. Bolting and barring heard.*]

Hans. Dere is vone ding sure, I don't get any shack rabbit to-night. Dot olt Vix iss a priddy goot cook, aber I like to see vot she cooks pefore she cooks him. Vhen she cooks vild shickens or shack-rabbits, dot vas ali right. You can see dem vot it is. Aber vhen she makes pologne sausage, look oud. [*Gags and makes sound in throat. Examines bench, R.*] Vell, I subbose, I have to sleep here on der piazza. Vell, here goes. Gute nacht!

[*Drops down on bench and dozes.*]

Enter Wix, R. with drawn knife.

Wix. Hah!

[*Steals softly up to Hans, Raises knife to stab him. Hans suddenly draws pistols and aims them at her.*]

Hans. (*Springing to his feet.*) Nod yet, olt laty!

Wix. Waneechee!

Hans. Come arount here, und come quck, or I shoot. [*Wix comes around bench.*] Now sit down on dot bench. [*Wix sits down on bench.*] Vot made you run away, vhen I tolt you to cook me some shack-rabbit?

Wix. White man—see um ghost.

Dead—see kill um.

Hans. You mean dot olt feller vot wants to shoot dot oter feller?

Wix. Ugh! him—yes. See um kill long time ago. Sure dead.

Hans. Is dot so! He vas deat, und don't know it. Vell, I thought, he vas a t—m fool. Who killt him?

Wix. No like to tell.

Hans. (*Pointing pistols at her.*) Tell.

Wix. Okoboji.

Hans. Is dot so! Vas you dere, when he killt him?

Wix. (*With motions.*) Take girl—see fall—then get baby.

Hans. You got a girl, vot has a baby!

Wix. (*Dropping hands.*) Waneechee!

Hans. Vell, is dot Waneechee married?

Wix. (*Disgusted.*) Ugh!

Hans. Dot means shack-rabbit. Gif me dot knife.

Wix. (*Puttiug knife behind her.*) Isahn, no—waneechee.

Hans. (*Pointing pistols at her.*) Gif it here. [*She gives him knife.*] I put it in mein garbet bag.

[*Gets carpet-bag from near house.*

Wix. Shunkah skah!

[*Hans puts knife in carpet-bag.*

Hans. Dot's der ent of your toad-schticker!

Wix. Waneechee.

[Yells and report of firearms off, R.
R. E.

Hans. Vot's dot!

[Runs up stage and looks off, R.
R.E.

Wix. (Grabbing up carpet-bag.) Hah, washtay!

[Crosses with carpet-bag to left.
Takes long strides. Exit, L.

Hans. Dot must be Indians. Where is Vix? (Runs to bench.) She iss gone! (Looks around.) Where is mein garbet-bag! [Enter Wix with carpet-bag, L. R.E. Strides across stage to R. R. E. and exits. Hans looking for carpet-bag does not see her.] She took it—und mein schnaps, und mein stool, und mein vooden shoes, und—[Shouts and yells off, R.R.E. Hans runs up stage and looks off.] Indians! Dey're gomin here! [Long scream off, R.] Dot's Rosy! [Shots and yell's off, R. Hans runs to house.) Oben dot door! Der Indians vas killen Rosy. Oben der door! Oben der door. (Pounds and kicks door.) Oben dot door, or I shoot der key-hole oud.

{Door opened.

Enter Smudge from house.

Smudge. What's the matter, Hans?

Hans. Der Indians vas killin Rosy.

[Whoops, shots, and yells off, R.R.E.

*Ham Morden backs on, R.R.E.
firing revolver. Has Rose in
faint on left arm.*

Smudge. (*Calls into house.*) Father!
Father! Come quick, the Indians are
killing Rose.

[*Hans runs to rear and getting
between Ham and R. fires with
both pistols to off, R.R.E.*

Mark Newell rushes from house

Mark. Where, oh, where is my
daughter!

Ham. (*With Rose, C.*) She is here,
safe in my arms.

[*Tableau—light thrown on Ham
and Rose.*

DROP-CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE. *Same as in act first.*
Time, night. Moon gone. Lights,
very low.

Hans with rifle discovered
walking up and down stage.

Hans. I bin on guart. Of I catch
dot Vix mit mein garbet-bag, she neffer
try dot again, (*Walks.*) Ach! of I die
by dese Indianer svinekopfs, Katreena
vill get mein affidavit for zwei tausend
dollar. I take a schmoke.

[*Takes out pipe, fills it, lights it,*
and smokes.

Enter Wix with Hans' carpet-
bag, R. R. E. Steals towards L.

R. E. Hans turns, sees her.

Wix. Secheedo!

Hans. Mein Got, mein garbet-bag!
(*Points rifle at Wix.*) Stop, or I shoot.

(*Wix stops.*) Come here mit dot garbet-bag. [*Wix advances with carpet-bag.*] Drop it. [*She drops carpet-bag.*] Now, sit down on dot bench. [*She sits down on bench with a bump.*] Dot's right. Always do vot I tole you, oddervise you might die suddenly. [*Lights match holds it close to her face, looks at her and laughs.*] Vell, you vas a sunflower, anyvay. You don't get away again. (*Calls.*) Miss. Rosy! Miss. Rosy!

Enter Rose from house.

Rose. What is it, Hans?

Enter Mark Newell from house.

Has rifle.

Hans. Here is dot squaw, Vix. I vant some rope to tie her mit.

Mark. (*Starting for Wix.*) Stand back—you'll need no rope.

[*Rose grasps Mark's arm and speaks in low voice.*

Rose. Father, Ham gave strict orders not to harm Wix. He said, though Jim Okoboji had nearly destroyed his influence with the tribe, that if finally attacked by the Indians and overcome before Dan arrived, he was confident he could persuade Wix to intercede for our

lives.

Mark. And what would her intercession avail?

Rose. Everything. She is the sister of Red Dog, the Sioux chief who is now down on the river with his band.

Mark. Rose, you have thwarted me at every turn. But for you, I should not now be struggling between duty to your mother, and gratitude for the preservation of your life and honor.

Rose. Ham says, if they find Wix dead—

Mark. They need not find her. We can dispose of the body.

[Pushes Rose aside and advances upon Wix. Rose follows him.]

Wix. *(Springing up)* Hab! White man no dead! White squaw dead sure.

Mark. *(Seizing Wix by the throat.)* Let me strangle her.

Rose. No, father, no! Wait.

[Removes Mark's hand from Wix's throat.]

Rose. Hans, take the squaw into the house, bind her securely, and return to me.

Smudge. Why not put her in the cellar, Rose?

Mark. A good idea! Then we'll have

the hideous thing out of sight. I can hardly bear to look at her. Is the cellar secure?

Rose. Yes, father.

Mark. Then put her in the cellar.

Hans. (*Touching hat.*) I do dot, mein herr. (*Pushes Wix towards house.*) In you go, olt laty!

Enter Ham from house with clock and lighted lantern.

Wix. Ham, Ham, no let um.

Ham. (*Apparently demented.*) Away hag, touch me not! What woman is this?

Hans. (*Pushing Wix into house.*) In mit you! In mit you!

[Exeunt Wix, Hans, and Smudge into house.]

Ham. I have twenty minuets yet. [*Sets clock and lantern on bench.*] I must have some rope--some rope to bind me with. Will you bind me, Rose? I might escape, if you do not bind me. (*Starting and pointing.*) Ha, look Newell--there!

Mark. (*Wildly.*) Oh, God!

Ham. (*Staring and dazed.*) Whose God?

Rose. (*Tenderly.*) Come, father Ham--

Come into the house. My mother has spoken to my heart. [*Turning to Mark suddenly.*] Father, do you know my conclusion? Ham Morden is not guilty.

Mark. (*With a groan.*) I would, it were so!

Ham. But I am guilty. Come, bind me. Bind me.

[*Puts hands behind him.*]

Rose. With my arms, poor Ham, with my arms.

[*Puts arm around Ham and leads him into house.*]

Mark. Greater is the struggle within me to inflict the penalty, than for him to bear it. I swore to kill the man who killed my wife. And shall I perjure myself! Jephtha swore to sacrifice first whom he met. He met his daughter, but he kept his vow. This is my precedent, set down in God's own book. I'll keep my vow.

Enter Rose from house. She has rifle. Sets rifle down near door and advances to Mark.

Rose. Father?

Mark. Well, what now?

Rose. Nothing, only—

Mark. Well?

Rose. I fear, Ham will lose his reason.

Mark. I fear, I shall lose mine.

Rose. Father, you do not mean to—

Mark. Time will tell.

Rose. I do not like your answer.

Mark. I will do nothing but what God justifies. Let that be your consolation. Watch me—watch the clock.

[Exit into house.]

Rose. He means to shoot Ham. Oh, what can be *done* to save Ham's reason? What done to save my father from so rash an act? My mind is set in the belief that Ham is not guilty. The half-breed and the squaw to make themselves secure against his conscience, may have told him, that he shot my mother. If Ham was drunk enough to entertain an act so cruel, he was too drunk to shoot with any aim. And besides, my father positively declares, he found no gunshot wound upon my poor mother's body. She was stabbed—stabbed from behind. Ham says, he shot her, but positively denies he stabbed her. There is some mistake—some savage lie. If my father should shoot Ham, and then find out he had killed an innocent man, such horror

and remorse would arise within him, that he would go raving mad. I must do something to prevent it.

Enter Hans with rifle from house.

Hans. Vell, Miss Rosy, I put her in der cellar.

Rose. Did you pull up the ladder?

Hans. I ditn't see none.

Rose. Didn't she go down the ladder?

Hans. No; I shoost dropped her in, kerplunk.

Rose. I hope you didn't hurt her.

Hans. She ditn't say noddings.

Rose. (*Going towards house.*) Well, watch the river, and warn us of any danger.

Hans. You bet, I do dot.

Rose. Have you plenty of ammunition?

Hans. Mein belt is full.

Rose. Be on your guard, Hans. (*Turns light in lantern down low.*) The Sioux are very cunning.

Hans. Yah, dese Indians vas achly. Dey shump up ven you don't oxspect dem.

Rose. Watch the river.

Hans. Yah, I do dot. [*Exit Rose*

into house.) I can see better mit dot light oop. (Turns light in lantern up.) It gets priddy dark by midnight, ven der moon goes down. Dose Indians is more quiet as dey vere. [Wix appears at rear end of house, gives terrific whoop, and vanishes. Hans jumps and shoots rifle in air. Yells—] Indians! Indians!

Mark with rifle rushes from house.

Mark. What's the matter, sir?

Hans. (*Sheepishly.*) I heard someding yell.

Mark. I heard it, too.

Hans. Yah, it vas loud.

Mark. It couldn't have been a coyote.

Hans. It ditn't sount like it.

Mark. It was a terrific screech.

Hans. It must 'a peen Indians.

Mark. I heard a shot, also.

Hans. Yah, dot vas me.

Mark. Did you shoot at something?

Hans. I ditn't see, vot it vas.

Mark. You better put that lantern under the bench. It exposes you to the fire of any hidden foe.

Hans. Dot light is all right. Of der Indians come, I jsee dem by dot light.

Mark. Huh! the Indians will see you by *dot* light, and put a bullet through you.

Hans. (*Sarcastically.*) You denk so?

Mark. You better keep your eyes and ears open.

Hans. I keep dem oben.

[*Beating of Indian drum off, R.R.E.*
E.

Mark. The Indians are still stirring.

[*Indian chant and drum off, R.R.E.*

Hans. Dey must be having ein surbrise barty.

Mark. If they don't surprise us, I shall be thankful. Look sharp, sir.

Hans. Yah, mein herr—[*Exit Mark into house.*—]pumperknickel. I don't like *dot olt grank*. He's too stiff in der back oop. He all der vwhile vants to kill *dot oter olt feller*. I keep mein eye on him. Of he gets too shmart, I tell him vot it is.

Enter Rose from house.

Rose Hans, I fear Wix has escaped. I looked down the cellar with a candle, and saw nothing there but a great pile of wood and brush.

Hans. Is *dot* so!

[*Rushes into house*

Rose. Now, may God help me!

[Turns rustic chair around, back of chair to audience. Pulls it back some distance in rear of bench and in line with left half of bench, the lantern and clock being on right. Picks up robe from rustic chair and spreads it over chair. Gets gun cautiously from against house. Returns to chair and hides under robe.]

Enter Hans from house with rifle.

Hans. She grawled oud. Where iss Rosyl

[Looks around.]

Enter Ham from house with rope.

Ham. *(Looking at clock.)* The time is nearly up. I must be bound. *(To Hans.)* Oh, sir! won't you bind me?

Hans. Nod by a t—m sight!

[Exit into house.]

Ham. Then I must bind myself. *(Sits down on left of bench and binds his legs.)* There,—but I can't bind my arms behind me. *[Enter Smudge from house.]* Come, Smudge, my boy, bind

my arms, and I'll speak a good word for you, up above.

Smudge. No, Ham, I wouldn't tie a cord on you for all that is in the world.

[Exit into house.]

Ham. There is no one to bind me, and I must be bound. The love of life is strong, and near it's close, the strongest break in resolution. *[Enter Mark from house with rifle.]* Come, Mark, bind my hands. *[Looks at clock.]* I have ten minuets yet. Come, Mark, come! Bind me—you are the executioner. *[Mark groans.]* I tell you, Mark, I must be bound. Come, bind my arms behind me. *[Mark binds Ham's arms behind back. Exit Mark into house with bowed head.]* Seven minuets more, and I shall meet her face to face. Do I dread death? I killed the mother, but I saved the children. *(Rises to feet.)* No, I do not fear to die. *(With deep mental agony.)* But, Oh! I wish I never had been wrong. *(Starting and staring into space.)* Hah, 'there she is now! Look! upon her breast, bright red upon her snowy garment, is the bloody mark of my cruel crime.

[Sinks down on bench and moans.]

Enter Wix, R. She steals up behind Ham and binds red bandana handkerchief over his mouth. Draws knife and walks around in front of him.

Wix. Wot think 'bout old hag, Wix, now? She no fool. Ham big fool. [*Mark appears in door of house; pauses and listens.*] Got to die to night 'cause kill nobody. Ham no kill white squaw. Ham shoot--too drunk--shoot up in air. Me stand 'hind white squaw--Ham shoot up in air--me stab white squaw--stab her in back. [*Mark overcome grasps side of door.*] Ham no love Wix, anymore--no, no more. Know it, now. Find out. Say love me--shake head, yes--cut cord--Ham go loose. Do all, Ham want done. [*Ham shakes head "no."*] Got die then--die to-night--no help. Die, 'cause kill nobody. Ham fool--big fool. Ugh, heap big fool! Time pritty soon--white man come--take gun--shoot Ham. [*Clock strikes twelve. Ham turns back to clock. Sits on bench facing L. Wix sideles around to left of bench and facing Ham. Mark sinks back in door. Wix looks towards house, but does not see Mark.*] Clock

strike—white man not come. White man no come, (*Flourishes knife and hisses.*) me kill you.

[*Shot fired by Rose from rustic chair. Wix falls with a screech, throwing knife from her. Ham springs to his feet, Rose slips out from under robe and steals off, R. K. E. Mark staggers to Ham, and releases his hands. Ham tears handkerchief from face.*]

Ham. Mark, I am not guilty. I did not kill your wife. (*With pain and dejection.*) But—but I was there.

Mark. Thank God, you were! By God's providence you were there to save my children.

Ham. I never thought of that! I never thought of that. How wonderful are the ways of providence!

Mark. What if I had killed you!

Ham. Think not of it! Who shot Wix? Did you?

Mark. No.

[*Kneels and releases Ham's legs.*]

Ham. Who did?

Mark. I don't know.

[*Rises to feet.*]

Ham. The shot was fired close to me I could smell the powder. For the

instant, I thought it was you—that I was shot.

Mark. I saw the flash of the shot. It was over there.

[Points to rustic chair.]

Ham. Where is Rose?

Mark. She left the house—

Ham. Mark, God has avenged us—both.

[Throws arms about Mark.]

Mark. Thank God, I didn't shoot you!

Rose rushes on from R.R.E., screaming.

Ham. It is Rose!

Mark. What's the matter, daughter?

Rose. The half-breed—the Indians!

[Great burst of lurid red light from off, R. Stage lit up from that side.]

Ham. They have fired the barn, and the stacks.

Enter Hans from house.

Hans. Vot. iss it taylight, alretty!

Enter Smudge from house.

Smudge. Oh, my! What is it, Rose? What has happened?

Rose. The Indians have set fire to

the barn and haystacks.

[*Long whoop off, R. R. E.*

Ham. They will attack us. [*Whoops and yells off, R. R. E.*] They are upon us! My rifle!

[*Starts for house.*

Mark. Daughter, get my rifle. It in the door.

[*Rose starts for house.*

Enter Jim Okoboji and Indians stealthily from R. R. E.

Smudge. Look, father!

[*Ham picks up Mark's rifle in door.*

Rose. The half-breed!

[*Mark turns. Okoboji raises rifle and shoots him.*

Mark. My God, I am shot!

[*Reels and falls. Rose screams. Indians yell and advance. Hans draws pistols.*

Hans. Back. Smooch! Get pehind me, Rosy.

[*Hans advances upon Jim and Indians, firing pistols. Ham rushes to Mark, and fires at Jim and Indians over him. Cheers and shouts off L. R. E. Jim and Indians retreat to right rear.*

Major Dan Corbin and Cowboys rush on from L. shouting and firing.

Major. Chase the red devils across the river, boys. (*Rushes to Rose and throws arms around her.*) Rose, Rose, my darling.

Rose. Oh, Dan, have you come at last! [*Jim and Indians retreat off R. R. E. followed by cowboys shouting and shooting.*] My father—

Major. Your father!

Rose. Yes. See! (*Points to Mark.*) The half-breed shot him.

[*Major, Rose and Smudge go to Mark, and kneel around him. Rose raises his head into her arms.*

Major takes Mark's hand in his.

Major. He is living.

Rose. Father?

Mark. (*Rousing up.*) I—yes—What is it, daughter?

Rose. Major Corbin is here. He is holding your hand.

Mark. (*Feebly.*) Ah, Dan, I am thankful you have come. I hardly thought, when I left you yesterday morning, that I should be lying here. I guess the villain has finished me.

Major. You should have waited,

Mr. Newell, and come with me.

Mark. Perhaps, I should, my young friend. But I never waited yet because of danger.

Major. We must get your father into the house, at once, Rose. He is covered with blood. We must hurry.

Rose. Do you think, father, if we assist you, you could walk.

Mark. I can try.

[*Ham and Hans stand R. R. looking off R. Yells off R; then, cheers, then shots. Ham and Hans rush off R.*]

Major. We must hurry. There may be more fighting out here.

[*Major, Rose, and Smudge assist Mark into house.*]

Enter Katreena Fledermaus, L.

Katreena. It may be Hans is here. He said he looks him a heimstet oud, down on der Cheyenne riffer by der Pierre crossing. Der Indians is gone. Oh, dot vas awful shooting! [*Several shots off, R.*] Der Indians!

[*Starts towards, L.*]

Hans backs on from, R. with drawn pistols.

Hans. (*Speaking to off R.*) Der cow-poy's vill drive dem into der river.

[*Katreena turns, sees Hans.*]

Katreena. Hans! Hans!

Hans. (*Turning.*) Vot, Katreena! How dit you get here—in a paloon?

Katreena. No; by der stage, Hans—by Major Corbin's. You glat I come?

Hans. Yahhhhhh!

[*They rush into each other's arms. As Hans' arms close around her one of the pistols in his hands goes off. Katreena screams.*]

Katreena. Ach, der gun!

Hans. It vent off, dot's all. Vell, come, ve go in der house. Rosy is dere.

Katreena. Rosy?

Hans. Yah—a fine young vomans.

Katreena. (*Notices fire.*) Oh my, vot a fire!

Hans. Der Indians done it.

[*Katreena sees Wix. Jumps back with slight scream.*]

Katreena. Vot's dot!

Hans. Dot's a deat—I mean a goot Injin. Come, ve go in der house.

[*Exeunt Hans and Katreena into house.*]

Enter Ham Morden R. R. E.

Turns, looks off, then advances.

[Wix raises up on hands.

Wix. *(In very feeble voice.)* Ham!

Ham!

[Ham pauses and looks down upon her.

Ham. Well?

Wix. Goin die. Ham. Come close. Been Ham's squaw long time. Goin die, now. Come, Ham. Wan say, sorry.

[Ham kneels down by her.

Ham. Well—I'm sorry, too.

[Wix snatches knife from Ham's belt and tries to stab him. Ham catches her arm and wrenches knife gently from her hand. Rises to feet, takes up lantern and clock. Exit into house. Closes door.

Enter Jim Okoboji and Red Dog cautiously, R. They speak in low voice.

Jim. Wix! What's the matter?

Wix. Sbot.

Jim. Who shot you?

Wix. No see.

Jim. Here is your brother, the chief, Red Dog.

Wix. Shunksba! Shunksba!

Red Dog. (*Bending over her.*) Hah—secheedo! Who shoot?

Wix. Not know--wanneechee.

Jim. The cowboys are after the band. We slipped into the grove, and they passed us by. If we could get into the house and kill all but the girl before the cowboys return—

Wix. Me get in house. Got hole in cellar. Got wood,—got brush in cellar. Make fire in cellar—house burn—white man run out—Shunksha shoot—Jim shoot—get girl.

Red Dog. Ugh! Ugh! Washtay!

Jim. Wix can't do anything. Show me the place. I'll go into the cellar.

Wix. No. Me go. I—you—me—put in cellar. Like to light fire. Make heart feel good. Kill me—yes. No matter—got die soon—too bad shoot.

Jim. What do you say, Red Dog?

Red Dog. Burn house. Kill Kolah-skah.

Jim. Good! We'll drop Wix in the cellar.

Wix. Yes—yes,—me go in cellar.

Red Dog. I—me—go too. Make fire. Shoot—kill—Ugh, washtay!

[*Jim and Red Dog lift Wix up by the arms and assist her off R.*]

Enter Major Dan Corbin and Rose from house. They stand in door.

Major. Everything is quiet.

Rose. The barn is still burning.

Major. The boys will drive the redskins across the river back on to the reservation.

Rose. We will leave here in the morning.

Major. Yes, most certainly, in the morning.

Rose. Father is very weak.

Major. He will die, dear.

Rose. Come, let us go to him.

[Exeunt Rose and Major into house.]

Jim Okoboji steals on from R.

Jim. I heard voices—the door is open.

Enter Rose from house.

Rose. *(Wiping eyes with handkerchief.)* Poor father!

[Jim aims rifle at her.]

Jim. Silence! Come to me, or I fire.

[Cowboys steal on along river from R. R. E. Rose dodges into house.]

Jim fires. Cowboys advance with a

yell. They spread out whole width of stage, enveloping Jim. Jim rushes towards L. Is intercepted by cowboy. Cowboy wrenches rifle from him. Jim draws knife, and backs to C. endeavoring to find opening for escape. Major rushes from house with pistol in hand Is followed by Hans with pistols, and Ham with rifle. Smudge appears in door. Jim turns, and faces Major. Major shoots him.

Jim. D—m you Corbin, you have killed me.

[Falls and dies.]

DROP-CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE. *Inside Ham Morden's house. Door in rear scene, C. Door, L. Bunk in wall of rear scene, extreme L. Bed in right corner. Small table near head of bed with lamp on it, lit. Lighted lamp with reflector on each side of center door. Chairs, furs and beaded robes about room. Deer head over center door. Guns on wall, and various Indian weapons such as war-clubs, bows and arrows etc. Large war-bonnet on wall over head of bed.*

Discovered: Mark lying in bed. Ham seated in large chair near bed. Major and Rose seated, C. Hans and Katreena seated in front of bunk, L. Smudge asleep on some furs, right of center door.

Major. It was late, Rose, but not too late.

Rose. My father—

Major. Too bad! Sorry—

Rose. Half an hour sooner—

Major. I made all possible haste. The ranch was surrounded by the treacherous dogs. We had to drive them back to get to you. I hope you will forgive me, Rose.

Rose. What for? You did the best you could. Who can do more?

[Major takes ring from pocket.]

Major. May I place this ring again upon your finger?

[Rose extends hand. Major puts ring on her finger. Hans and Katreena converge apart in low voice.]

Hans. Yah, I got me dot farm picked oud.

Katreena. Dit you, Hans!

Hans. Yah; und it's fine.

Katreena. Von't ve be happy!

Hans. It is down by der river.

Katreena. By der riffer?

Hans. Yahhh. Und dere is a nice bluff mit a voots on it.

Katreena. A voots?

Hans. Yah, cedar—fine cedar.

Katreena. Dot is shoost der ding for fire-vood und post-holes.

Hans. Yah.—Und ven ve got some shildrens—

Katreena. Hush! der peobles vill hear you.

Hans. Der olt man in der bed is priddy bat hurt.

Katreena. (*Shaking head.*) I don't denk he gets petter.

Enter Mahzahskah at door, L.

Mahzahskah. Cowboy come; say, white man wan see me.

[*Major and Rose arise.*

Rose. Yes, come—the white man is my father. He is lying in the bed. The half-breed, Okoboji, shot him.

Mahzahskah. Okoboji shoot him! Ugh, s e-e e-cheedo!

[*Rose leads Mahzahskah to bedside.*

Rose. Here, father, is Mahzahskah, the friendly Indian mentioned in your letter.

Mark. Mahzahskah, you have seen my face before.

Mahzahskah. Ugh! see you, sure. Long go—when boy. (*With wave of hand towards Ham.*) Kohlahskah send me. Bring you dinner—bring water—bring pony. Got penny—you give. (*Takes string with Chinese coin on it from neck, and holds it up before*

Mark.) See, same penny. Got hole in it.

Mark. It is the same.

Mahzahskah. Take money—you give me—when come back—give mother—mother clap han—say, washtay! Then call me, Mahzahskah. Mahzahskah mean money in Sioux.

Mark' God bless you, Mahzahskah! (*Takes Mahzahskah's hand.*) God bless you for your kindness to me! But Jim Okoboji has finished me.

Mahzahskah. Jim Okoboji—secheedo! Major Dan shoot him—we take him scalp.

[Holds up scalp; draws knife; flourishes it; gives low whoop. Returns scalp and knife to belt. Extends hand to Mark. Mark grasps it.]

Mark. God bless you, Mahzahskah!

Mahzahskah. White man go spirit—Wahkahn!

[Retires to L.C. Major advances to bedside.]

Major. I hope, Mr. Newell, you are feeling better.

Mark. I am so near dead, I hardly feel at all.

Rose. (*Kneeling at bedside.*) Oh, father, have hope!

Mark. I fear, hope will not avail me.

Rose. (*Rising.*) Have some more brandy.

Mark. (*Faintly.*) Yes, more brandy, daughter. [*Rose gives him brandy from small table.*] There! I feel better. Major Corbin give me your hand. [*Major gives hand to Mark.*] In your letter, you wrote me, you loved this girl, and desired to make her your wife.

Major. I did.

Mark. Rose, come close. (*Puts Rose's hand in Major's*) Take her, Daniel—love her—protect her.

Major. With my life.

Mark. That is all for the present. I must rest.

[*Major retires to C. Rose kneels at bedside. Takes father's hand and bows head upon it.*]

Major. Mahzahskah, I received word, yesterday, that two troops of cavalry had left Fort Mead for the Cheyenne. They may be camped a few miles from here. I wish you would ride up the Deadwood trail, and if you come upon them, hurry them along.

Mahzahskah. Fetch'um quick. All on jump.

[*Exit at door, L.*]

Major. You better get some sleep, Rose.

[Rose rises to her feet.]

Ham. Yes, Rose, you must get some sleep. I'll watch your father to-night. If he grows worse, I'll call you.

Major. I have stationed the boys at various points around the ranch, and I must go and visit them, or they'll think I've forgotten them.

[Rose goes to Major.]

Rose. Do you think the Indians will come again to-night?

Major. No, not to night. I am quite confident of that. They've had enough for a few hours. I am sure the cavalry will be along some time in the morning, so don't worry any more, dear, about the Indians. Ham will watch your father, and I will watch the Indians, while you sleep. Good night! *(Kisses her.)* Hans, secure the door after me.

[Hans and Katreena arise. Hans advances to Major, and Katreena crosses to Rose.]

Hans. *(Assumes position of a soldier, and salutes Major.)* Yah, mein herr Major.

[Major returns salute and exits at door, L. Hans secures door.]

Rose. Ham, you go and rest, and I will remain with father. You are tired, and racked with the sorrow and horror of the night.

Ham. I feel as fresh as though I had slept. That awful burden that throbbed within my brain, shed itself in tears. My mind is free, and I am free. Go, Rose, and Katreena can go with you.

[Rose goes to bedside.]

Rose. Well, good night, father. I ought not to leave you, but Ham insists.

Mark. (*Weakly.*) Ham is right: you were right. If I had killed Ham, I should have been damned for all eternity. You are like your mother, Rose, in form, in face, in voice—exactly like her. Who sees you, sees her.

Ham. (*Clasping hands and looking up--aside.*) I saw her, to-night.

[Rose bends over Mark. He embraces and kisses her.]

Mark. Go, my dear, dear, daughter. We'll dream of her. (*Points up.*) Your loving, gentle, mother—you sleep—she sleeps—yes, sleeps—in that lonely grave down—down—on the Pierre trail. I'll soon be with her.

Rose. (*Sobbing and crying.*) No, no, father!

[*Ham groans and weeps. Hans and Katreena advance and look on sympathetically.*]

Mark. Go—sleep, daughter, or—you will be a tired nurse.

Rose. (*Tenderly.*) Good night, father.
[*Kisses Mark. Turns down light in lamp on small table and goes to, C.*]
Come, Katreena. Good night, Hans.

Hans. Goot night, Miss Rosy.

[*Hans retires to, L.R. Rose moves towards center door, stops, turns, and gazes at Ham. Advances to him and kisses him on forehead.*]

Rose. Good night, father Ham.

Ham. (*With deep pathos.*) Good night, my daughter!

[*Rose and Katreena turn down light in lamps and exeunt at C. door, closing door behind them.*]

Hans. Vell, I lay me down in der bunk und take a schnooze. [*Tumbles into bunk—disappears. Raises up and peers out.*] No vone can zee you, vhen you schleep here.

[*Lies down—disappears.*]

Mark. Give me your hand, Ham.
[*Ham gives hand. Mark holds it.*]
Ham, I am going to die to-night. Be a father to Rose and Mark when I am

gone. You will, won't you?

Ham. Mark, Mark, you know, I will.

Mark. Rose loves you, Ham, better than she does me. I disgusted her. I was a fool—a hasty fool. I have always been too hasty.

Ham. Too hasty, Mark?

Mark. Yes, I always acted first, and thought afterwards.

Ham. You have had great sorrow.

Mark. I was in such a hurry to kill you. More of my haste and foolishness.

Ham. You thought I had killed your wife—the mother of your children—a dear and gentle mother.

[*Groans.*]

Mark. Yes, I thought you had killed her.

Ham. I thought so too.

Mark. It was in the letter, and I believed it, and would have killed you. I was a fool. You'll forgive me, Ham?

Ham. Forgive you, Mark! God bless you! yes, if there was anything to forgive.

Mark. (*After a pause.*) Ham, what brought you here?

Ham. Bad influences first; love for a woman, next—a woman who—Oh, well! Then drink. That sums it up.

Mark A great soul cursed with an evil destiny!

Ham. Destiny!—Yes, destiny.

Mark. What state do you hail from, Ham?

Ham. Kentucky.

Mark. You are a Southerner.

Ham. Yes, I was born in the South, but spent most of my early years in the North.

Mark. You must have seen some wild times here.

Ham. Yes, wild—and bad. Very bad.

Mark. Well, you are all right now, Ham.

Ham. Yes, thank God,—thank God!

Mark. Mine is a cruel fate, but I thank God, too. I—I—thank—thank God, too. I thank God—yes—

[Mark sinks into silence and sleep still holding Ham's hand. Finally Ham nods and sinks into sleep. Cellar door, L. slowly raised, and Wix and Red Dog appear ascending from cellar. Red Dog lowers cellar door noiselessly over back.]

Wix. *(In whisper.)* All sleep.

Red Dog. *(In whisper.)* Ugh, kill all!

[Red Dog assists Wix up on to

stage. Red Dog descends into cellar. Wix crawls to Ham's chair. Raises herself slowly, noiselessly and cautiously to her feet by holding to Ham's chair. Draws knife with right hand and holds chair with left. Raises knife to stab Ham in back. Hesitates, then lowers knife. Raises knife again to stab; hesitates; shakes head, and lowers knife.

Wix. (*In low voice.*) No.

Mark. (*In gasping whisper.*) Ham!
Ham!

[*Wix stares at Mark. Mark makes a few feeble struggles and dies. His hand slips lifelessly from Ham's and hangs over side of bed. Red Dog appears in cellar opening. Motions vehemently to Wix to stab Ham. She raises knife, hesitates, shakes head, and lowers knife.*

Wix. (*In low voice.*) No can.

[*Red Dog draws knife and starts to crawl out on stage. Cavalry bugle sounded at distance outside.*

Red Dog. (*In low voice.*) Hah
cavary!

[*Cavalry bugle sounds outside. Shot*

fired outside.

Red Dog. Hah!

*Enter Rose followed by Katreena
C. door.*

*[Red Dog hastily retreats into
cellar.*

Rose. Ham! Ham!

[Ham springs to his feet.

Ham. *(Dazed and half asleep.)* I—yes!
Where—*(Turns, sees Wix.)* You!

*[He steps back from her. She stabs
herself; throws knife from her,
and stretches hands towards Ham.*

Wix. *(Entreatingly.)* Ham!

*Falls forward on face, and dies.
Hans jumps from bunk nearly
falling into cellar.*

Hans. Der cellar is oben. I nearly
vent in.

Ham. What has happened, Rose?

Rose. Indians in the house. There—
[Points to cellar.

Ham. In the cellar!

Hans. Gan it be!

*[Ham rushes to cellar and looks in.
Hans draws pistols and looks in
cellar. Smoke followed by fire
comes up from cellar.*

Hans. Fire!

Ham. The house is on fire! Wix has

set fire to the wood and brush in the cellar.

Hans. Yah, she done it.

Rose. Father is very still.

[*Rushes to bedside.*]

Katreena. Oh, Hans, vot vill ve do!

Hans. Don't be scart, Katreena.

Rose. Father! Father! (*Feels Mark's hands and face.*) Why, Ham, father is dead!

Ham. Dead!

[*Hans rushes to door, L; throws it open, and fires pistol into air.*]

Major and cowboys rush in at door, L.

Major. What is the matter?

Ham. Rose says, she saw Indians there.

[*Points to cellar.*]

Major. The house is on fire!

Rose. Oh, Dan! father is dead.

[*Major crosses to bedside and feels Mark's hand.*]

Major. It is as I expected. Come, Rose! Come, Katreena! We must get out of here. See the fire is creeping up the wall.

Ham. Hurry! There is powder in the cellar.

Major. No time to loose. Hurry, Rose! Out—out, Katreena!

[*He hurries Rose and Katreena to L.*

Major. Hans you look after Rose and Katreena.

Hans. Yah, mein Herr Major!

Rose. Where is Smudge?

Ham. Smudge! (*Rushes to Smudge, and pulls back robe.*) Smudge! Smudge! (*Shakes him.*) Smudge! Smudge! He is dead asleep. (*Lifts him up.*) Smudge! Smudge!

Smudge. (*Waking up.*) Who—who—What's the matter?

Ham. The house is on fire.

Smudge. Who set it on fire?

Ham. Indians.

Smudge. Where is Rose?

Ham. Over there.

[*Points to L.*

Hans. Yah, ve are all here, Smooch.

[*Smudge hurries to Rose.*

Rose. We nearly forgot you, brother!

Smudge. I was awful sleepy.

Katreena. Oh, Hans! Look how der fire burns.

Rose. Dan, my father!

Major. Come, boys, carry out Mr. Newell.

Ham. Hurry! Hurry! The powder!
Major. Yes—the powder! Hurry, boys!
[Cowboys carry Newell out door, L. followed by Rose, Smudge, Katreena, Hans and Major. Ham dashes off center door. Shouting and shooting outside, L. Red Dog, knife in hand, backs on at door, L. Enter Ham with small tin box at center door. Red Dog turns and sees Ham. Ham dodges to door, L. and throws out tin box. Red Dog and Ham grapple and struggle. Red Dog tries to stab Ham. Ham pushes him back in front of open door, L. Shot outside, L. Red Dog is shot. Throws up hands and staggers back from Ham. Ham springs out at door, L. Red Dog staggers to door, L. and with great effort closes it and bars it. Falls against door, slides down it, rolls over and dies. Room all in flames. Loud explosion. Wix and Red Dog covered with debris and rear of building blown out showing landscape at sunrise. Cavalry seen descending bluff.

DROP-CURTAIN.

ACT V.

SCENE. *Sitting room in Major Dan Corbin's house on the Cheyenne. Everything indicating ease and good circumstances. Lamp with elegant shade on table right, lit. Door with heavy portieres, R. R. Fireplace with bright wood fire in it in center of rear scene. Large window to left of fireplace. Large easy chair to right of fireplace. Other chairs and rockers about room. Door, L. Small table rear of door, L. Rugs and fur mats on floor. Several Indian trinkets on wall. Snowstorm outside, wind moaning and whistling outside. Storm beats against window.*

Enter Major Dan Corbin at door, L. followed by Smudge.

Major. I fear, Smudge, this snow-storm will turn into a blizzard.

Smudge. It roars and sizzes like a blizzard already. Whenever the store door is opened, the snow blows in like

jehu. [*Wind whistles and hisses.*]
Listen to that, Major. That sounds like
a blizzard, don't it?

Major. Yes, it's a blizzard—a regular
old Dakota blizzard, Mark.

Smudge. It sounds odd when you
call me, Mark.

Major. Well, that's your name, boy.
Rose has ordered that you be called by
that name. You were named after your
father.

Smudge. Ham always called me,
Smudge.

Major. Well, you can settle that
matter, when Ham comes back. He
said in his last letter, we might expect
him any day.

Smudge. Ham has been gone quite
awhile. Over two years. Ever since the
day you and Rose were married. He
went back to Kentucky.

Major. Yes, to his old home.

Smudge. Do you know why Ham
left his old home and came out here
among the Indians?

Major. Some love affair that went
wrong with him. I imagine, when Ham
loves, he loves hard.

Smudge. How long is it since Ham
first came here?

Major. Twenty years.

Smudge. Didn't he write to his folks?

Major. Not a word.

Smudge. Rose says, Ham is an educated gentleman. I wonder why they named him, Ham.

Major. That is an abbreviation of his name, Hamilton. His proper name is Hamilton Morden.

Smudge. Rose says his people were rich.

Major. Yes, very rich, Ham has gone back after his money.

Smudge. I don't see how a man like Ham could live with an ugly old squaw like Wix.

Major. When Ham first came among the Sioux he was a hard drinker. Drink will dull the nature and coarsen the tastes of the best and most refined of men. [*Wind whistles and storm beats against window.*] Whew! the blizzard is growing worse every moment. Has Mahzahskah come with the mail?

Smudge. No, sir. I'm afraid, if he hasn't stopped somewhere for the night out of this storm, he'll be frozen to death.

Major. It's bad—bad! Heavens, what

if Ham should be with Mahzahskab!

Enter Rose with babe in her arms at door, R. R.

Rose. (*Anxiously.*) Is Ham coming to-night?

Major. Well, well; mother Rose and her baby!

Rose. You did not answer my question, Dan. Is Ham coming to-night?

Major. Don't worry, little mother! You know in his last letter he said, we might expect him any day. But there is no certainty of his coming to-night. Give me the baby, dear. [*Rose gives him baby.*] Come to your father! My, how our boy grows!

Smudge. He's a perfect giant.

[*Major sits with baby in easy chair right of fireplace. Smudge stands near him and plays with baby.*

Rose goes to window. Wind shrieks and storm beats against window.

Rose. This is a terrible night! A terrible blizzard!

Major. (*Tossing baby.*) Up you go, and down you come.

Rose. Dan, if Ham comes from town, how will he come?

Major. With Mahzahskah in the stage.

Rose. (*Anxiously.*) Do you think he will come?

Major. Possibly.—Possibly! Mahzahskah has been watching for him, and has met him at the train, if he came. Don't worry, dear. The stage is well covered, and Maz has plenty of robes with him. I see that he always takes them with him at this time of the year. There is no knowing when they may be needed.

Rose. (*Abstractedly.*) Lost in a blizzard!

Major. Great heading for an article in an eastern newspaper.

Rose. (*Looking out window.*) Ham Morden lost in a blizzard!

Major. Pshaw, dear! they could keep warm in that stage with those robes for two days. And besides, Ham may not come. As for Mahzahskah, whoever heard of a frozen Indian!

Rose. Dan, this is Christmas eve. Somehow I am impressed, that Ham would think of this, and come to-night.

Major. You wrote Ham about this little Ham, didn't you?

Rose. Yes, Dan.

Major. (*Jumping up.*) By George! I believe he will come.

Rose. I will go up stairs and set a light in the west window.

[*Exit Rose at door, R. R.*]

Smudge. Rose is awfully worried about Ham.

Major. It is a bad night.

Smudge. Yes, to get lost in.

Enter Rose at door, R. R.

Rose. That light may help them.

Major. Take baby, Rose, while I put some more wood on the fire. [*Rose takes baby and sits in easy chair right of fireplace. Smudge near. Major puts wood on fire.*] There is nothing like a good fire on a night like this. [*Fire flames up chimney.*] Santa Claus will have a cold drive of it. If he is caught in this blizzard and frozen, how the eastern papers will roar until he is thawed out.

Rose. If Ham were only here, we would all be so happy.

Major. I tell you, dear, Ham will be all right. He is no tenderfoot.

[*Smudge pulls off baby's stocking.*]

Smudge. That's what I want. I'm going to hang it up for Santa Claus.

[*Hangs baby's stocking from mantel-piece over fireplace.*] There grandfather Santa Claus, if you don't put something in that little stocking—

Major. We'll advertise you in the eastern papers.

Smudge. (*To Rose.*) Let me take baby a little while, sister.

Rose. You must be very careful not to drop him.

Smudge. (*Taking baby.*) I won't, if he don't squirm like thunder.

[*Rose rises and Smudge sits down in easy chair with baby. Rose crosses to window. Major stands with back to fire.*]

Major. T'was the night before Christmas,

When all through the house,
Not a creature was stirring,
Not even a mouse—

Enter at door, L. Hans Fledermaus. He is covered with snow, and carrying a small Christmas tree. He is followed by Katreena. She is so bundled up that not even her eyes are visible.

Hans. Mein Gott, vot a vetter!

Ach! I been near frozen. Und mein frau, Katreena—Katreena, how's der dwins?

Katreena. (*In muffled voice.*) Shoost so varm as zummer.

Major. Why, it's Hans and Katreena! How in the world did you find your way in this blizzard?

Hans. I shoost made it, und dot's all. (*Extending hand.*) You don't opect us to-night, Major?

Major. (*Shaking Hans' hand.*) Thank heaven, you came safely through!

Hans. Dank you, Major, dank you!

Major. Come, Rose, help Katreena off with her wraps. Come up by the fire, Hans. Here, give me your coat and hat,

[*Hans goes to fire. Major takes his coat and hat, and puts them left. Rose assists Katreena. As wraps are removed, a pair of twins about six months old appear. They are dressed in old German style.*

Rose. It is a good thing, Katreena, you were so well wrapped up.

Katreena. Yab, Mrs. Corbin, dot saves dee dwins.

Rose. (*Moving chair up by fire, left.*) Take this chair, Katreena, by the fire. You must be cold.

Katreena. Oh, no-o-o! I vas varm all der time. Aber dee dwins might be a liddle cold.

[Sits in chair by fire.

Smudge. (*Rising.*) Here, sister, take him. He's beginning to squirm.

[Rose takes baby.

Katreena. (*Noticing baby's stocking hung from mantel.*) Oh, Hans, look vonce! A liddle shtoging by der shimney for Zanta Claus. Ain't dot cute!

Hans. Dot is liddle Ham's stoging.

Smudge. Here, give me your babies' stockings, Katreena, and I'll hang them up, too.

Katreena. In vone minuut, Mark. *[Takes off twins' stockings.]* Here iss Katreena's, (*Gives Smudge little blue stocking.*) und here iss Hans'.

[Gives him little red stocking. He hangs them from mantel.

Hans. Smooch, you vas mein own poy. I bin your fater. Vell, Major, of you oxcuse me, I bin varm now. I shoost go oud in der shtore und schmoke. I like to buy somedings, too, pefore I forget him. (*Picks up hat.*) Mein house is too weit von here, Major, und der shtorm iss so bad—I hope Mrs.

Corbin ve don't make you some drouble,
—but ve like to shtay here to-night.

Rose. Hans, you and your wife are
part of our family. To the best we have,
you and Katreena are ever welcome.

Hans. Dank you, Rosy, dank you.
Und Major, oxcuse me.

[Salutes Major. Exit at door, L.]

Rose. Come, Katreena, we will go up
stairs. There is a good fire up there.
As soon as we put the babies to sleep,
we will come down and get some
supper.

*[Exeunt Rose with baby and
Katreena with twins at door, R. K.
Smudge picks up Christmas tree
and exits at door, L.]*

Major. If Ham has come, Mahzahskah
will surely pull him through. That
Indian can read nature as I read print.
What to me would be no guide at all,
would be to him as a shining light.

*Enter Ham covered with snow
at door, L. He is followed by
Mahzahskah.*

Ham. Dan!

Major. *(Turning and grasping
Ham's hand.)* Ham! *[Ham takes off
over-coat.]* Mahzahskah, you brought

him through all right!

Mahzahskah. Yes, bring um—pretty near go over bluff.

Ham. But we saw the light—it's misty glow. We drove towards it, and it brought us here. But for that light, we would have gone astray. Who set that light there, Dan?

Major. Rose.

Ham. (*Affected.*) Call her.

Major. She worried dreadfully for your safety.

Ham. Why not? I am her father.

Major. I will go, and call her.

Ham. (*Noticing little stockings.*) What little stockings are those?

Major. The red and the blue belong to Hans' twins.

Ham. So Hans has twins!

Major. No, his wife, Katreena.

Ham. You caught me there, Dan. But there are three. The little white one, to whom does it belong?

Major. To Ham—my baby boy, little Ham.

Ham. (*Sinking into easy chair right of fireplace,*) Go, call the mother.

Major. Rose is up stairs.

[*Exit Major at door, R. R.*]

Ham. After a hard struggle, I

obtained my own. They hated to let go, but the law was inexorable. So, they paid me my money, and I left. How strange, a brother should be so selfish. (*Rises.*) Come here, Maz. (*Ham takes out roll of bills. Mahzahskah, who is standing near table, L. advances to Ham.*) You did wonderful in that blizzard, Mahzahskah. Here is a Christmas present for you.

[*Gives him bunch of bills.*

Mahzahskah. Ugh, washtay! Kohlahskah washtay! Bill--plenty bill!

[*Exit at door, L.*

Ham. (*Looking at remaining bills in hand, deprecatingly.*) Money! (*Thrusts bills into pocket.*) Together with what the tin box contained, my fortune now sums up, two hundred and eighty thousand dollars. Not for myself, do I value this money, but for the children of *her* whose sad, cruel, death, I witnessed. Ah, but Rose is my child—my own dear daughter—on that terrible night Fate gave her to me. My name may bear some stains, but with its stains, she gave it to the child. Hamilton Morden Corbin! Perhaps, what I shall do for him while I live, and by my death, will help to wash those

stains away. This is Christmas eve, and I am here. Now, to the purpose. (*Rises, and takes out large pocket-book*) I have fifteen one thousand dollar bills. I'll put seven of them in little Ham's stocking, just for a Christmas gift. (*Puts money in little white stocking.*) Those other two—Poor little things! What's money good for, but to make others happy! Here goes a thousand for each of the twins. (*Puts a bill in little red stocking, and one in the blue.*) There, so much for the babies and Christmas.

Enter Rose at door, R. R. followed by Major carrying baby, and Katreena with the twins.

Rose. Ham!

Ham. Rose, my daughter!

[*Embraces her with emotion and fondness. Holding to her hand he drops down in easy chair right of fireplace and weeps with bowed head. Rose gently withdraws hand, and takes baby from Major and holds it before Ham.*

Rose. Big Ham—little Ham. Hah, washtay!

Major. This is our son, Ham.

Hamilton Morden Corbin.

[*Ham looks up at baby, but is so overcome with emotion he does not speak. He takes baby, and Rose kneels right of chair.*

Ham. (*Holding up baby.*) God bless this little babe, and make him all that I was not: a good man; a noble man; a moral man.

Rose. Ham, Ham, you have a cruel conscience. God knows, at heart, you are the best of men.

[*Turns to Rose and smiles through his tears.*

Ham. (*Touching himself.*) Bad Ham. (*Holds up babe.*) Good Ham. Ugh, washtay!

*Enter Mahzahskah at door L.
Sits down quietly and unobtrusively at table, L.*

Katreena. Ah, Mr. Morden, I vas so glat to see you.

Ham. Give me the twins too, Katreena. (*Laughs.*) I am an old grandfather, and love all the children of my family.

Katreena. You vas der best man, vot I know.

[*Puts twins in Ham's arms, one on each side of little Ham. Kneels*

to left of Ham's chair.

Enter Hans at door, L.

Hans. Oh! Mr. Ham, I vas so glat to see you pack again. (*Looks at Ham with babies and begins to cry.*) Oh, my! Oh, my!

Katreena, Vot's der matter, Hans?

Hans. I gan't help it. Eferyding looks so pooty.

[*Sleigh-bells outside, L. Mahzahskah jumps up.*

Mahzahskah. (*Clapping hands, and dancing and singing, Indian fashion.*) Ay-yah, ay-yah, ay-yah. Ugh, washtay! Washta-a-a-y!

Enter Smudge at door, L. rigged up as Santa Claus with buffalo robe, fur cap, sack on back, and sleigh-bells. Carries small Christmas tree, lit up and hung with glittering trinkets. Sets tree on table, L. Mahzahskah sits at table, L. Expresses great admiration for tree.

Smudge. (*Going towards fireplace.*) Good children, sleep, sleep, sleep.

Ham. Too late, old Santa Claus! Someone is ahead of you.

[*Rose and Katreena spring up, and rush to stockings. Rose takes down little white stocking, and Katreena, the red and the blue.*

Rose, (*Examining little stocking*,) Look, look, Dan, what is in our boy's stocking!

[*Major takes money out of stocking.*

Major. Money! Bright new paper money! Seven thousand dollars. Oh, Ham! this is too much.

Ham. A trifle, Dan, of what parental love delights to give to Rose and hers.

Katreena. (*Busy with twins' stockings.*) Oh, Hans! shoost look vonce vot iss in der pabies' stogings.

[*Gives Hans bills.*

Hans. Mein Gott im himmel! I neffer saw such big money pefore in my life. Swei vone tousand dollar bills.

Katreeea. Oh, Mr. Ham—Mr. Mor-den—

Ham. No thanks, Katreena. It will give the little ones something to meet the world with, when the time comes.

[*Katreena takes twins. Sits and puts stockings on them. Ham rises. Rose takes baby, sits down in chair vacated by Ham and puts on baby's stocking.*

Smudge. (*Throwing off cap, robe and sack.*) I wish I'd hung up my stocking.

Ham. You are all right, my boy. I am your banker. When you want money, draw on me at sight. Here is a little change for the present.

[*Gives him roll of bill.*]

Smudge. (*Examining bills.*) Holy Moses! Here, Maz, is your Christmas.

[*Offers Mahzahskah a bill.*]

Mahzahskah. (*Rising.*) No, Ham give um. Got Christmas already. (*Shows bills.*) Ugh, heap Christmas. Washtay!

Smudge. Well. Maz. you take the tree, anyway. He can have it, can't he, Hans?

Hans. Sure! Sure!

Mahzahskah. (*Delighted.*) Ugh, can to washtay!

[*Sits and admires tree.*]

Ham. Hans, my German friend, you saved my live once at a moment when my death would have brought horrible misery to Rose. For the present, there is no other way to repay you but this. (*Takes out large pocket-book.*) Here is five thousand dollars for yourself—and Katreena. The twins have had their Christmas.

[Offers Hans money.]

Hans. But Mr. Morden—

Ham. Take it, Hans.

Hans. (*Taking money.*) Mr. Morden, I can't express my dankfulness. I bin too stobbed oop in der neck. (*Wipes eyes and makes gagging click in throat. Aside.*) Dot don't mean shack-rabbit now.

Ham. Dan, you and I will go into business together. Will you take me as a partner?

Major. Most assuredly.

Ham. I shall put twenty five thousand in the store, and one hundred thousand in horses and cattle.

Major. We'll own the country in a few years!

Ham. All for the children, Dan,—for the children. Come here, daughter. (*Rose rises with babe in her arms and goes to Ham.*) And you too, son. [*Smudge goes to Ham.*] Rose, I have set aside eighty thousand dollars for you and Smudge. Forty thousand for you, and forty thousand for him. Yours, I will give you, now. Here is a draft, daughter, for forty thousand dollars. [*Katreena interested, rises. Hans takes one of the twins. Ham*

116 THE PIERRE TRAIL.

gives Rose draft.] I shall act as trustee for Smudge until he is of age. I have securely invested his money at seven per cent. That will give him an annual income of twenty eight hundred dollars.

Smudge. Gee-whimity-jim!

Ham. That will clothe and educate you, boy. Besides, daughter, I have willed everything to you and Smudge with the exception of a special bequest to my little namesake in your arms.

Rose. But, father Ham, you may marry, and --

Ham. Until I do, the will shall stand. I shall never marry. My life, I have dedicated to her. (*Looks up.*) When the spring comes, daughter, (*Puts right arm about her.*) and the crocuses bloom upon the bluffs, you and I, and Smudge (*Puts left arm about Smudge.*) and Dan, will go down the Pierre trail in search of your mother's grave.

CURTAIN.



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